

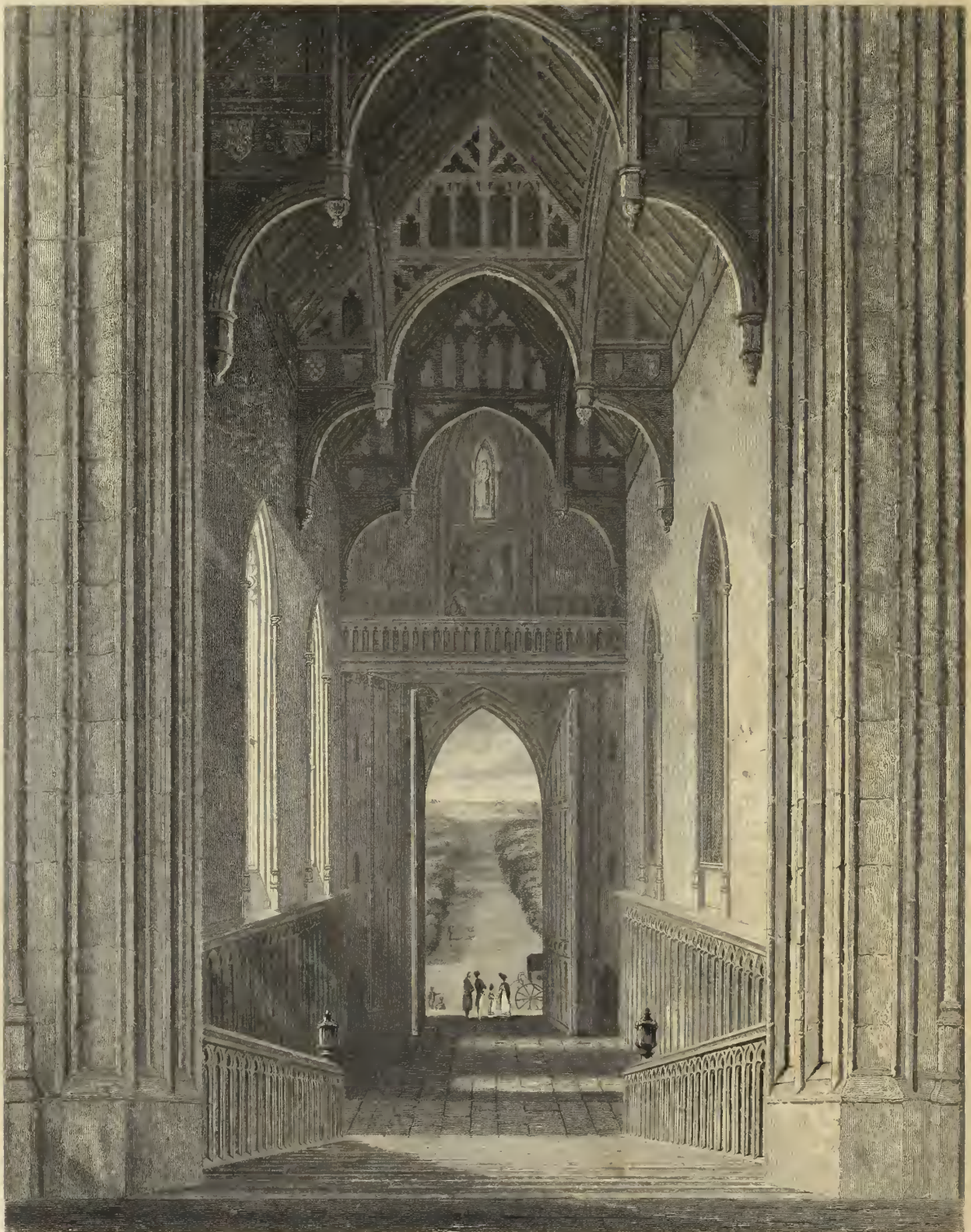


Page 8 of 27



ILLUSTRATIONS
OF
FONTHILL ABBEY.

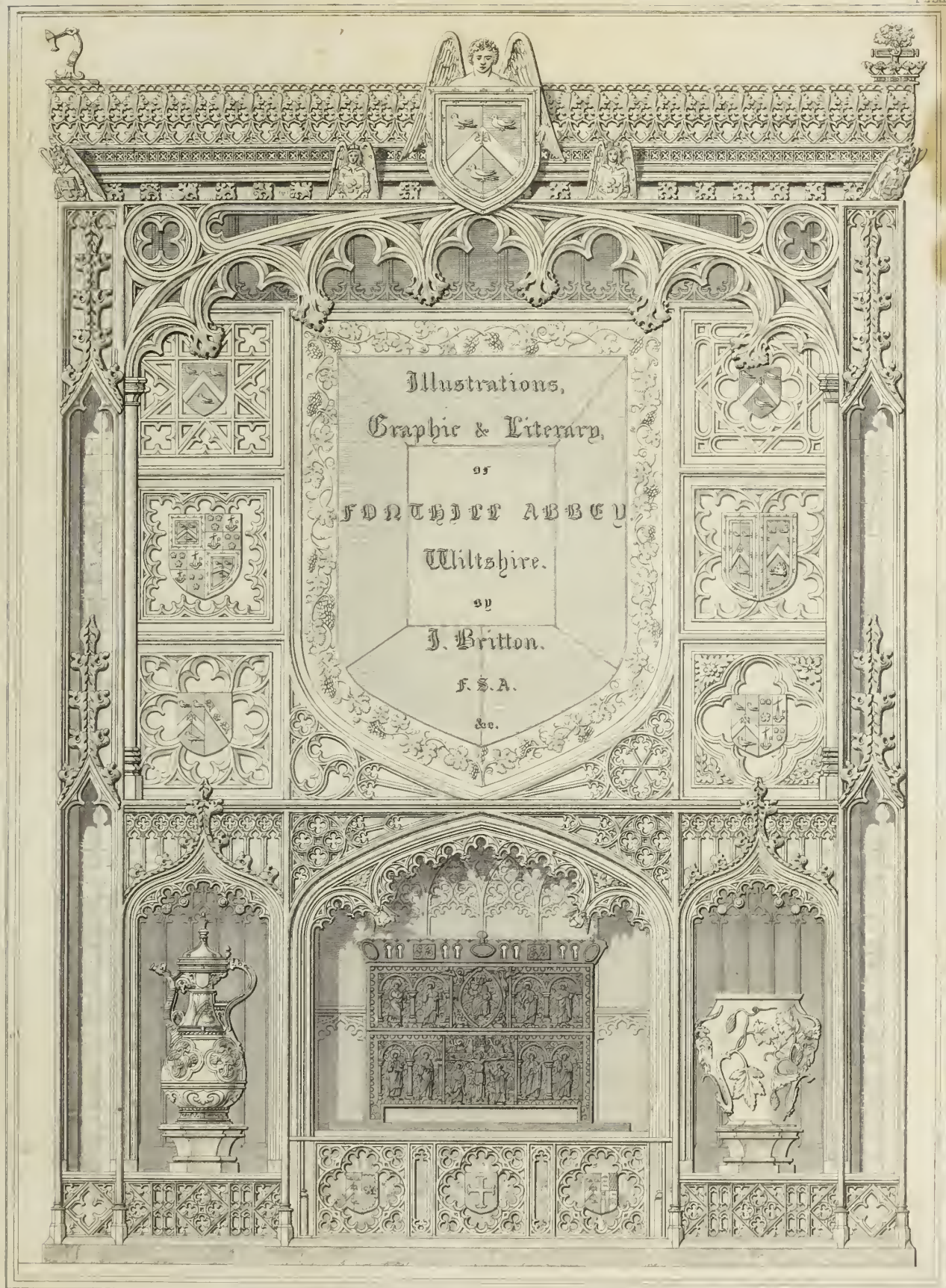




drawn by "ASTINEAU" (1800) & Sketched by CATHERINE M. G. Engraved by J. SANFORD FOR BRITTON'S ILLUSTRATIONS OF A

THE INTERIOR OF THE CATHEDRAL

London: Published by the Author, April 1, 1825.



Engraved by J. L. KNEELAND Designed by J. R. TOWN Drawn by J. PAINTER

PRINTED BY J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1818

THE FOUNTHILL ILLUSTRATIONS OF FOUNTHILL ABBEY

Vol. II. Part II.

Printed and Published by J. JOHNSON, 1818.



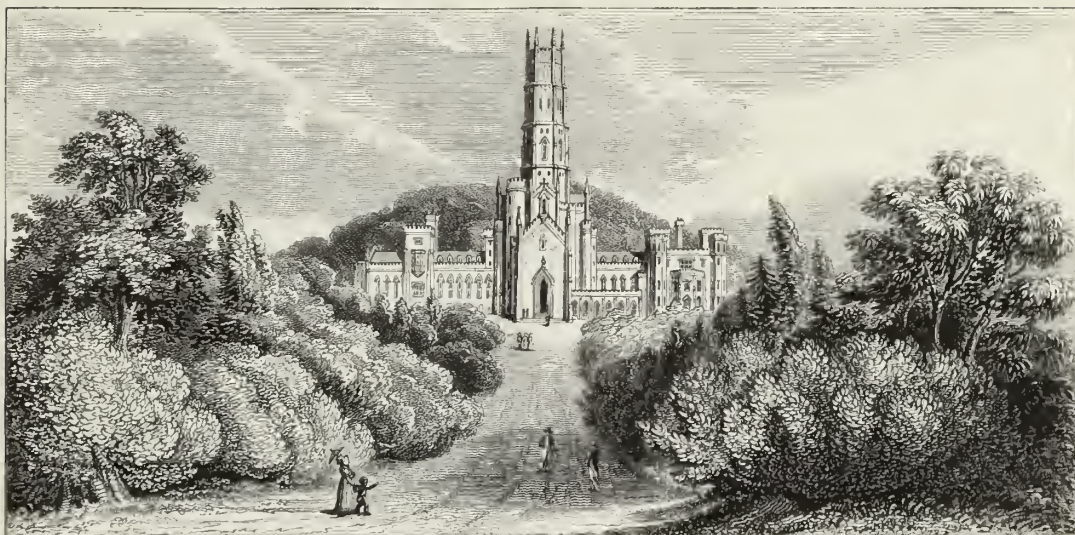
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GRAPHICAL
AND
LITERARY ILLUSTRATIONS
OF
Fonthill Abbey,
WILTSHIRE;
WITH
HERALDICAL AND GENEALOGICAL NOTICES
OF
THE BECKFORD FAMILY.

BY
JOHN BRITTON,

FELLOW OF "THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF LONDON," FELLOW OF "THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF LITERATURE,"
HONORARY MEMBER OF "THE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY OF NEWCASTLE,"
HONORARY SECRETARY AND TREASURER OF "THE LONDON ARCHITECTS AND ANTIQUARIES SOCIETY,"
HONORARY MEMBER OF "THE NORWICH SOCIETY OF ARTISTS," HONORARY SECRETARY OF "THE WILTSHIRE SOCIETY," ETC. ETC.



VIEW FROM THE END OF THE WESTERN AVENUE—ENGRAVED BY J. THOMPSON, FROM A SKETCH BY T. HIGHAM.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR, BURTON COTTAGE, BURTON STREET.
SOLD BY LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, BROWN, AND GREEN, PATERNOSTER ROW; TAYLOR, HIGH HOLBORN;
CLARKE, BOND STREET; ETC.

1823.

AN ADDRESS TO THE SUBSCRIBERS TO THIS VOLUME.

THE kindness and zeal of friends, in recommending the present work and advocating the cause of the author, demands not only his unqualified and heartfelt thanks, but a frank and candid declaration of his intentions and actions respecting its execution. Though he would gladly avoid every thing that might savour of egotism, yet when he knows that falsehood and misrepresentation have been artfully employed against his "fair fame," he hopes to be excused for saying a few words in self defence, or with a view of counteracting the deleterious effects of calumny. He commenced this volume under the most favourable and cheering auspices—for he was honoured with the full approbation of the enlightened proprietor of Fonthill Abbey, who also took the kindest interest in its execution and prosperity: to merit such favoured distinction, and also to satisfy the reasonable and sanguine expectations of zealous friends, rendered the author's task delicate, arduous, and difficult; delicate, as wishing to speak freely and fully both facts and opinions; arduous and difficult from the numerous and distracting occupations in which he has been unavoidably engaged for the last year; from some very tantalizing and distressing circumstances that have been connected with this volume; and further, from an apprehension that a merely descriptive essay could not be easily rendered either amusing or interesting. These considerations always obtruded on his mind, and of course must have checked or cramped the free and fluent exercise of his pen. He was desirous of making a volume unique in its style of embellishment and in the literary department: one that should reflect some degree of credit on himself, as well as on the artists and artisans jointly and severally engaged in its execution. He has not, however, satisfied his own wishes and judgment; but if his friends and the public in general approve, he will thereby derive much consolation and reward.

He forbears entering into private disputes and misunderstandings: as he hopes that even those who have been induced to act with hostility or enmity towards him may grow wiser as they grow older—may learn to exercise that candour, sincerity, and good will towards their associates, and even competitors, which they will find most likely to be beneficial in their progress

through life, and afford them the best consolation in the hours of sickness and sorrow.

It is commonly said that authors are a vain and irritable race of mortals: it may be said with equal truth, that if they were not so, they never would be authors. Without a little vanity, or ambition, for the first is only the younger brother of the second, few persons would voluntarily place themselves, by their published writings, on a pedestal in the public market place, to be pointed at by folly, pelted by envy, and bespattered with filth by ignorance and vulgarity. The same vanity, or sensibility, that impels them to court and covet fame and fear disgrace, naturally produces that irritability which always has and must ever belong to acute minds. These characteristics of authorship are either amiable or offensive, as they are exercised and publicly manifested. Governed by reason and taste, they are virtues that conduce to the public welfare: if influenced by a bad heart, or any of the evil passions, they may corrupt others, but will inevitably disgrace the possessor. An author naturally and rationally covets fame: it stimulates his energies, awakens his faculties, and impels him to run the race of rivalry and competition. But for its "spirit-stirring" influence, few persons would put up with "the whips and scorns of time, the proud man's contumely, the oppressor's wrong, the insolence of office, and the spurns that patient merit of the unworthy takes."

At page 26 of this volume, it is stated that a great part of the rare and valuable contents of Fonthill Abbey was to be sold: that event has taken place, not by public sale, but in a way as unexpected and extraordinary as many other *extraordinary* transactions connected with this extraordinary place. Only a day or two previous to the appointed commencement of the auction it was publicly announced that Fonthill Abbey, with all its contents and appurtenances, were collectively sold to John Farquahar, Esq.¹ In the

¹ In the Gentleman's Magazine for October, 1822, appeared the following remarks respecting the close of the Abbey:—"The pleasing vision is now passed, and the noise of the auctioneer's hammer will not be heard—silence pervades the long-drawn ailes—the lofty portal is closed—and the abbot is returned to his cloisters. But with a farewell look he will shortly bid adieu to these walls, which are destined to greet a second abbot. We are enabled to state from undoubted authority, that the number of admission tickets to Fonthill Abbey amounted to 7200."

summer of the present year, 1823, "the splendid effects" of this mansion are again announced to be sold by auction, by Mr. H. Phillips, and the grounds, house, and its contents to be again exhibited to visitors, from the sixteenth of June to the commencement of and during the sale, when thirty-seven days are to be occupied in the disposal of its contents.

As the volume now produced differs from the terms announced in the original prospectus, it may be proper to explain that the author has in almost every respect exceeded his promises; that it contains more engravings and more letterpress than he either proposed or intended; and that he cannot accuse himself of having forfeited his pledge on any other point, but as it respects the number of copies to be worked. This has been exceeded, and for the following plain, and as every publisher would say cogent reason: at the time of printing the letter-press more large paper copies were subscribed for than was originally promised, and to supply the same, it was evident that a larger impression must be worked. The author ventured to do so, relying on the good wishes and interpretations of real friends, and not thinking it of much consequence to anticipate enmities on such a point. Reflecting, however, on this subject, and fearing there may be the least ostensible ground of objection to his extension of number, he has resolved to make some sacrifice on his part by destroying SEVEN OUT OF ELEVEN OF THE PLATES. By this means the original subscribers are guaranteed against a depreciation in the value of their copies by a multiplicity of impressions and volumes being circulated. The author has been induced to adopt this course of procedure, first, to give an additional interest and value to the copies originally subscribed for; secondly, to prevent the possibility of the complete volume being hereafter printed and multiplied, to the deterioration of its value; thirdly, from a persuasion that many of his old established friends and patrons will see an inferiority in some of the plates to those belonging to his Cathedral Antiquities; and, fourthly, from an ardent desire to advance his works in literary and graphic execution, as he advances in age and experience, rather than allow of "a falling off." Another consideration has also had some weight in this determination: some years back his name appeared to a volume entitled "The Fine Arts of the English School," in the property

of which he had a small share. After expending a large sum of money on the work, and not finding an adequate return, the proprietors sold the whole stock, with the copper plates: the latter have been *worked so hard* that they can work no longer; and many weak, worn out impressions have been sold at depreciated prices all over the country. The author has suffered by this, and has received some harsh and unmerited reproofs for a transaction over which he had no controlling power.

August 27, 1823.

J. BRITTON.

In addition to the above statement, for those who are not *intimately* acquainted with the author may fairly question his veracity on a point where so much property has been sacrificed, he has obtained the following declaration from his copper-plate printers.

“ WE the undersigned hereby declare, that we have seen the faces of the plates hereafter named completely destroyed: viz. PLATES I. III. IV. VII. VIII. IX. and X. of Britton’s “ Illustrations of Fonthill Abbey.”

(Signed) COX and Co. }
MACQUEEN, } *Copper-plate Printers.*

August 27, 1823.

Impressions of these plates may be seen at the Author’s; Longman and Co.’s; Taylor’s, Holborn; and Clarke’s, Bond Street.

“ I hereby declare that I have worked only *six sets folio*:—*three hundred imperial 4to.*—and *five hundred medium 4to.* of the letter-press of this work.”

(Signed) CHARLES WHITTINGHAM.

THE ENGRAVED TITLE PAGE

WAS designed for the purpose of displaying some of the principal armorial bearings of the Beckford family. These heraldical insignia have certain peculiarities and distinctions which the learned herald will readily recognise, but which may escape the notice of and be disregarded by the casual reader. Mr. Beckford's paternal and maternal descent is remarkable, and in reference to the extensive and illustrious combinations which it presents, perhaps unprecedented. This has been ascertained after much laborious research and critical investigation by the professional heralds; and the result has given rise to the splendid, varied, and numerous armorial illustrations which at once adorn and confer an unique character on Fonthill Abbey. Desirous of having something in the present volume to designate this peculiarity, and at the same time to exemplify the heraldical decorations of the edifice, I was induced to arrange an architectural design, which might with propriety embrace some of these objects.

In the painted windows, sepulchral monuments, and other parts of our antient churches and monastic edifices, heraldical ornaments and insignia have generally constituted a prominent feature; for the chivalry and religion of our fore-fathers seem to have been intimately blended. Whilst the knight or baron was alike distinguished in the field and at the tournament by his appropriate badge and crest, the bishop, abbot, and other eminent ecclesiastics had their respective cognizances. These were variously displayed, and officially employed to identify rank, connection, attribute, and station: heraldry was therefore studied and cultivated in unison with architecture, and the designs of the one were often made subservient, as they were in fact analogous, to the other. As the window was not only an essential but a very important feature of a building, it necessarily engaged much of the attention and fancy of the architect. He appears to have been constantly studying variety, and seeking for novelty: and every succeeding age, from the eleventh to the sixteenth century, manifests the exercise of imagination, caprice, and taste in architectural design; I venture to say taste, from a conviction that

many windows in our old ecclesiastical edifices evince beauty in form and effect, as well as skill in execution. This member of a building having, therefore, afforded so much scope for invention, and such abundant sources of beauty, I conceived that it was susceptible of further varieties and adaptations¹. The design now exhibited was the result of this conviction; but it was only intended for a specific object: *i. e.* an arrangement of rich and varied architectural features to combine with heraldical insignia. Each part of this design is copied from antient ecclesiastical specimens, and is therefore sanctified by age. The parapet, or upper member, with the frieze, is from a beautiful monumental screen in the nave of Wells Cathedral: the arch mouldings, spandrels, and trefoil suspended arches are from a monument in the north transept of the same very interesting church, as are the two side pilasters, with crocketed pinnacles: the six compartments of tracery enclosing the shields are from monuments in Norwich and Winchester Cathedrals, as are also the facings of the three pedestals beneath the niches:—the two side niches are from St. George's Chapel, Windsor; and the arch mouldings of the centre niche are from Exeter Cathedral. The reliquary represented in the centre, and the vase and cup in the side niches, are among the valuable curiosities of Fonthill Abbey, and will be described in a subsequent page. The upper centre compartment, containing the writing of the title, is intended to represent different panes of stained glass, surrounded by a border of the vine tendril. The whole design is supposed to be one side of an octagonal

¹ Many beautiful and interesting examples might be adduced to exemplify this remark. In Normandy, France, and Germany the old monastic churches abound with fine windows of varied forms and elaborate tracery; whilst many in our own country are at once bold, rich, and intricate in design. The great eastern and western windows of York Cathedral, the eastern window in Carlisle Cathedral, the western window in Durham Cathedral, that at the east end of Gloucester Cathedral, one in the east end of Beverley Minster, and those in the chapels of St. George, Windsor, Henry the Seventh, Westminster, and King's College, Cambridge, are distinguished by numerous mullions, and tracery, in addition to a splendid display of painted glass. These, as well as the circular or catharine wheel forms in Westminster Abbey Church, Lincoln and York Cathedrals, shew that the ecclesiastical architects were men of fancy and genius; constantly seeking for novelty and beauty, and laudably emulous to surpass each other in their respective designs. They did not slavishly and supinely copy the works of their predecessors, but dared to think and act independently of precedent.

museum, or cabinet room: four sides of which may be thus adorned with painted windows, having the centre divisions occupied by appropriate historical pictures, the side compartments varied with portraits, fancy subjects, &c. whilst the niches may be enriched with numerous choice and beautiful objects, and the whole adapted to contain and display them to the greatest advantage. The remaining four sides might be occupied by an appropriate fire place, door-way, niches, &c.; whilst the ceiling should be adorned with several converging ribs, with bosses and shields, and an elaborate pendant in the centre, with a branch, or lanthorn, suspended from it. To render such an apartment complete, and each part in unison with the rest, its draperies, carpet, stove, chairs, tables, and other appendages should be executed in corresponding style, and the whole painted and gilt in harmonizing and analogous colours. A judicious adaptation of the latter, with a liberal use of mirrors, is calculated to produce many pleasing, impressive, and even fascinating effects². It will not require any great exertion of imagination to conceive the effect of such a room on the eye, and the varied associations and images which it must create in the vivid mind. In reflecting on the subject, I was imperceptibly led to carry on the design, and form a plan of a splendid mansion to be executed in a corresponding style, at least in "gothic" form and "gothic" character. A suite of domestic and fancy apartments were soon raised, in which a porch, a hall, staircases, and galleries, libraries, drawing, eating, music, and cabinet rooms, with picture and sculpture galleries; also subordinate offices and bed rooms were all

² In the very interesting house and museum of Mr. Soane, Lincoln's Inn Fields, are many exemplifications of the beauty, variety, and pleasing effects that may be produced by the admission of light, and by the employment of numerous mirrors. The skilful mode of lighting his English gallery, museum, &c. is admirably adapted to display pictures and sculpture to advantage. It cannot but excite the surprise and regret of every person who has reflected on the subject, and been desirous of admiring and dwelling on the finer works of art, to find them badly placed in common rooms, with several small windows opposite to the pictures, and these facing either the east, west, or south; added to which disadvantages may be remarked a total disregard to the colour of the walls and to contiguous objects. After thousands of pounds have been expended on a collection, it is really astonishing to find them thus sacrificed—thus immured either in dark cells, or exposed to the scorching and dazzling sun. Let us, however, hope that a better taste has commenced, and that the noble art of architecture will be liberally encouraged by the affluent, and skilfully employed by the professor to protect and adorn her sister arts.

combined, and peculiarly adapted to their respective purposes by forms, colours, admission of light, and embellishment³. If the frigid, calculating critic disapproves of this "vision of fancy," let him reflect that the place which gave rise to it—the fascinations of art and literature with which it is associated, and the marvelous tales related of the Abbey and its highly gifted founder, are not a little calculated to awaken and give exercise to "the Pleasures of Imagination."

"The 'artist's' eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And as Imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the 'artist's' pencil
Turns them to shapes—and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name."

DESCRIPTION OF THE ARMORIAL BEARINGS IN THE ENGRAVED TITLE PAGE.

UPPER compartment, *dexter side*:—the arms of BECKFORD, as borne on antient seals and escocheons of the family. *Azure, a cheveron between three martlets Or.*

Sinister side:—the said arms, as augmented in a grant to William Beckford, Esq. son and heir of Sir Thomas Beckford, Knight, dated Feb. 2, 1 Jac. II. 1685. *Party per pale gules and azure, on a cheveron argent, between three martlets Or, an eagle displayed sable.*

Centre compartment, *dexter side*:—the shield of WILLIAM BECKFORD, Esq. of Fonthill Abbey. The same arms, with the further augmentation of a *bordure Or charged with a double tressure flory and counterflory gules* (assigned to him, by patent dated March 20, 1810, under the authority of the Earl Marshal of England, as a memorial of his descent, by numerous lines, from the blood royal of Scotland), quartering the arms of his late mother Maria, daughter and coheir of the Hon. George Hamilton, second surviving son of James the sixth Earl of Abercorn, *viz.* HAMILTON and ARRAN, *gules three cinquefoils ermine, pierced of the field, and argent a lymphad sable.*

³ In the splendid mansion of Mr. Thomas Hope, Duchess Street, we see and admire the exercise of taste and talent in the appropriate adaptation of furniture, draperies, and forms to unite with the style and character of each respective apartment.

Sinister side:—the arms of Mr. Beckford, impaled with those of his late wife, Lady Margaret, only daughter of Charles Gordon, fourth Earl of Aboyne, viz. *azure, a cheveron between three boars' heads, within a double tressure, flowered with fleurs de lis within, and adorned with crescents without, Or.*

Third compartment, *dexter side*:—the shield of Mr. Beckford's grandfather, Peter Beckford, Esq. impaling the arms of his wife, Bathshua, daughter and coheir of Julines Hering, Esq. viz. *vert, on a bend argent a cinquefoil between two lions passant guardant gules.*

Sinister side:—the shield of Mr. Beckford's late father, the Right Hon. William Beckford, of Fonthill, Lord Mayor of London, impaling those of his wife, Maria Hamilton, abovementioned.

On the *frieze*:—angels supporting shields of the arms of BECKFORD, BELLOMONT, and LATIMER; and the crest of BECKFORD, viz. *a heron's head erased at the neck Or, gorged with a collar between two bars gemel flory gules, and holding in the beak a fish argent*, and the crest of augmentation, viz. *in a ducal coronet Or an oak fructed and penetrated transversely in the main stem by a frame-saw proper*, being the crest of the noble family of HAMILTON, *charged with the arms of LATIMER (gules, a cross flory Or) on a shield pendent from the tree*; which crest was granted to Mr. Beckford by patent, December 31, 1798, in allusion to his descent, through the antient family of MERVYN, lords of the manor of Fonthill Gifford, from William the first Lord Latimer, temp. Edward I.

Base compartment, *centre shield*:—the arms of LATIMER, as above described.

On the *dexter side*:—the shield of Mr. Beckford's paternal uncle, Julines Beckford, Esq. M. P. for Salisbury, impaling those of his wife, Elizabeth, daughter and coheir of Solomon Ashley, of Ashby-Ledgers in Northamptonshire, Esq. viz. *azure, a cinquefoil within a bordure engrailed ermine.*

On the *sinister side*:—the shield of Mr. Beckford's paternal uncle, Francis Beckford, Esq. of Basing House, Hants, impaling those of his first wife, the Lady Albinia, daughter of Peregrine Bertie, Duke of Ancaster, viz. 1. BERTIE, *argent, three battering-rams azure.* 2. WILLOUGHBY, *Or, fretty azure.* 3. VERE, *quarterly gules and Or, in the first quarter a mullet argent.* 4 as 1st.

LIST OF THE PLATES,

WITH BRIEF NOTICES OF THE SUBJECT OF EACH: ALL OF WHICH WILL BE
FURTHER DESCRIBED IN SUBSEQUENT PAGES.

PLATE I. Plan of the principal suite of apartments, shewing their relative situation and comparative sizes: A. the grand entrance hall or vestibule: a a. staircases, that on the south, or right hand, leading to the minstrel gallery, that to the left communicating by a passage in the wall to a niche or oriel, b, containing a statue of Alderman Beckford, in white marble, by Moore: B. landing at the top of a flight of steps, with small apartments on each side: c. centre of the great octagonal tower, or louvre, with four arched recesses, covered with red curtains, above which are four tall windows, filled with stained glass: d. the gallery of King Edward III. filled with books, cabinets, curious tables, &c. and ornamented with pictures, painted glass, and armorial blazonry: E. a dark arched vestibule to the oratory, or sanctuary, F. with closets, in imitation of confessionals, on each side, h. h. and with doors of open work in the screens: G. china room: H. and J. new rooms, appropriated to cabinets, pictures, &c.: K. L. L. M. unfinished rooms: N. private room in the north tower, with a large oriel window: o. passages: P. P. St. Michael's gallery, with niches for books, cabinets, groined ceiling, having five windows to the west, three bay windows to the east, and one to the south, all ornamented with painted glass of armorial bearings, historical figures, &c. and hung with purple and scarlet draperies: Q. and R. yellow drawingrooms, with bookcases, cabinets, and rich furniture: S. green cabinet room: T. U. bed-rooms: W. X. G. G. Z. D. E. staircases to other floors: P. P. enclosed cloister or passage between the brown dining room, on the ground floor, and the great hall: N. cloister, with five open arches to the south: F. passage to domestic offices on the ground floor. (It will be necessary to observe, that the plan of this passage, as well as those of the two cloisters, are on the



ENGRAVED by J. LAMBERT from A DRAWING by G. CATERMOLE, ARCHT. DRAWING, NO. 17 A
 FROM "BODLEY MANUSCRIPT."
 H.W. VIEW.





Engraved by H. WILKES, from a Drawing by W. CATTELMORE, for BRITTON'S ILLUSTRATIONS of PA

MONASTICAL ARCHITECTURE

London: Printed by J. G. ALLEN, 4, Pall Mall.



ENGRAVED BY W. TOMBLE SON SKETCHED BY T. HIGGINS DRAWN BY S. RAYNER FOR BRITTON'S ILLUSTRATIONS OF P.A.

FRONTISPIECE

Printed for the Author, April 1843



basement floor, beneath the galleries, but on a level with the great hall. It was thought advisable to show them here for the sake of informing the stranger.) No. 1, groining of the ceiling in the cabinet room, s: 2. pattern of tracery, mouldings, and panels in the ceiling of the Edward gallery; the lozenge compartments have the cinquefoil in the centre, accidentally omitted in the drawing: 3. part of the groining in the St. Michael gallery: 4. pattern of the ceiling in the yellow drawingrooms, Q. R.

PL. II. View of the great hall, or vestibule, central tower, exterior part of Edward the Third's gallery, &c. from the north east. Intricacy, variety, and grandeur characterize this view of the building, from the varied lines, forms, and parts that enter into the composition. Immediately in the centre is the circular staircase, which communicates to a series of rooms and a gallery called the nunneries, and also to the great tower.

PL. III. View of the building from the south west, shewing a small part of the oratory end, at the left; the west and south sides of the great hall; an enclosed cloister, with seven windows, communicating between the hall and the wainscot dining room, &c.; two octagon towers of four stories, with a bay of two stories between; another open cloister to the right, facing the south, connecting the octagonal tower at the south-west angle with a large square tower at the south-east angle. Behind and beyond this cluster of buildings are seen the two octagonal turrets at the east end, also a pinnaced turret, two projecting masses of building on the south and west sides of the tower, each of which contains a sitting and bedroom, also three sides of the lofty tower. This view of the edifice, like the former, displays a variety of forms and members, of studied dissimilarity, but all combining to constitute a picturesque group.

PL. IV. View of the building from the north-east represents to the right a large and lofty mass of buildings, with two octangular turrets¹ at the east end; two others of smaller dimensions at the opposite end; three lofty and handsome windows perforating the side wall; a range of open arches above;

¹ These turrets are copied from two in the entrance gateway to St. Augustine's Monastery at Canterbury.

and the whole crowned with an open embrasured parapet. The great centre tower is connected with the western end of this part of the edifice, and branching off from that to the south is a small tower, with a range of buildings connecting it with two other large square towers, having oriel windows, embattled parapets, &c. The usual approach to the building conducts the visitor to this point, after passing through a steep unbrageous road. There are entrances to the house beneath the large oriel on the south, and also under the smaller oriel, behind the two figures and dog. Seen from this point, the building, as a whole, appears to disadvantage: for the large and lofty eastern wing renders that to the south apparently small and low: the centre tower also seems to lose in height and magnitude, and the eye is dissatisfied with the disproportion and contrast between these two wings. Although I cannot avoid noticing this want of combination and harmony, I am also aware that this part of the edifice is evidently left in an imperfect and unfinished state; and it cannot be doubted, but the mind that projected so much, and has evinced on many occasions such acuteness and fine taste, had resources and plans to remove or counteract the blemishes now noticed. This part of the building was to have been enclosed by an embattled wall, with a tower gateway, and other architectural appendages: these were to have extended from the mansion to the north, where a mass of coach houses, stables, and other buildings were also to have been erected in a style corresponding with, and apparently forming part of the Abbey.

PL. V. Distant view of the Abbey from an eminence to the south west. This print serves to show the undulating form of the grounds, and the thick plantations that surround the house.

PL. VI. View of the hall, from the octagon, looking west, will be described in a subsequent page, as will also the following subjects,

PL. VII. View of four sides of the octagon.

PL. VIII. View of part of King Edward the Third's gallery, looking north.

PL. IX. View of the south end of St. Michael's gallery, looking south.

PL. X. One of the east oriel windows, with fire-place beneath; in St. Michael's gallery.

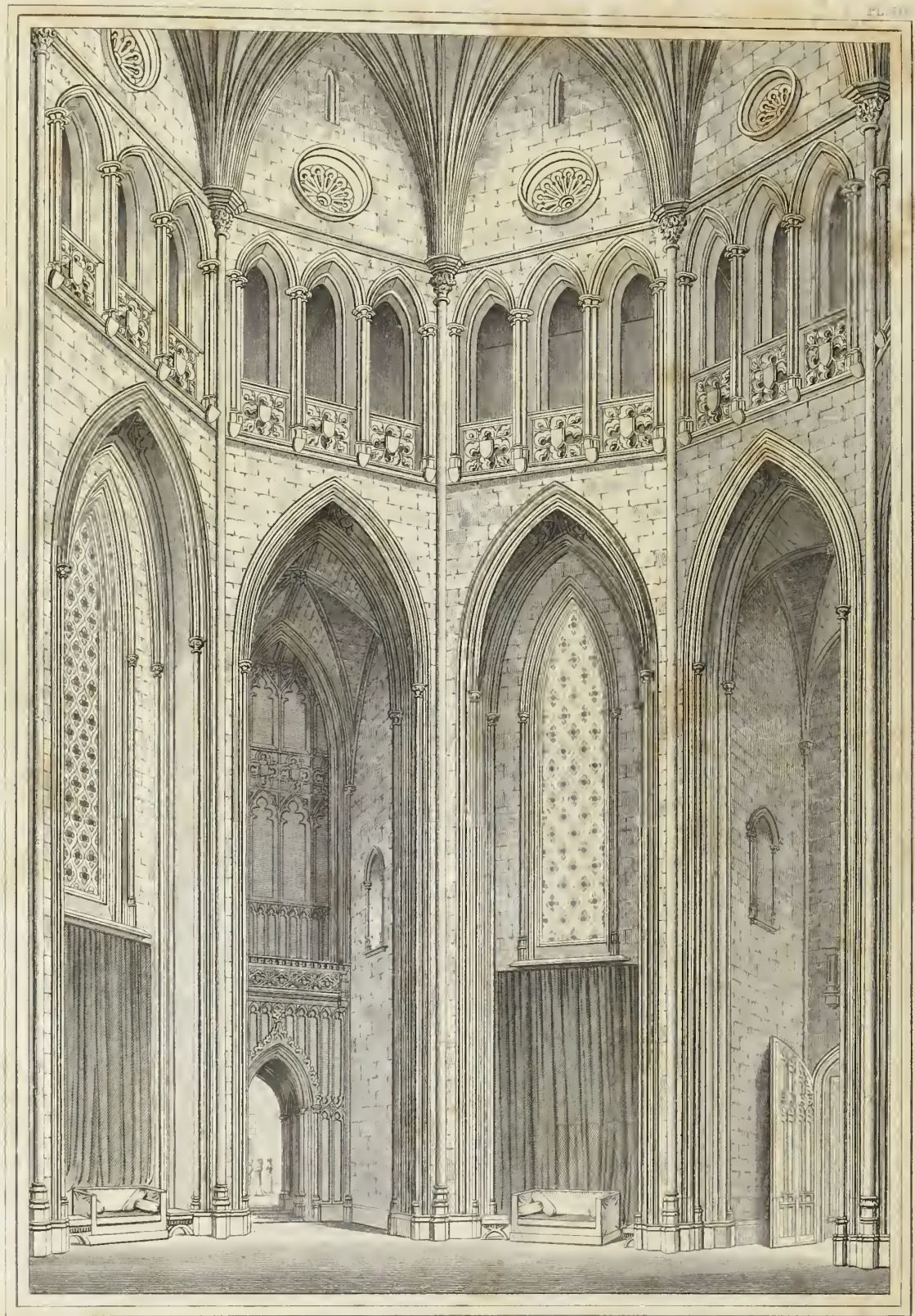


ENGLAND. W. J. VERRILL. CHURCH BY T. HUGHES DRAWN BY J. MARTIN FOR B. LUTON ILLUSTRATIONS OF F. A.

THE ENGLISHMAN'S BOY
 A DISTANT VIEW FROM F. W.

1840. Printed for the Author, April 1840.





INTERIOR VIEW OF THE CHORUS
OF THE CATHEDRAL OF LONDON

Engraved by the Author April 1850

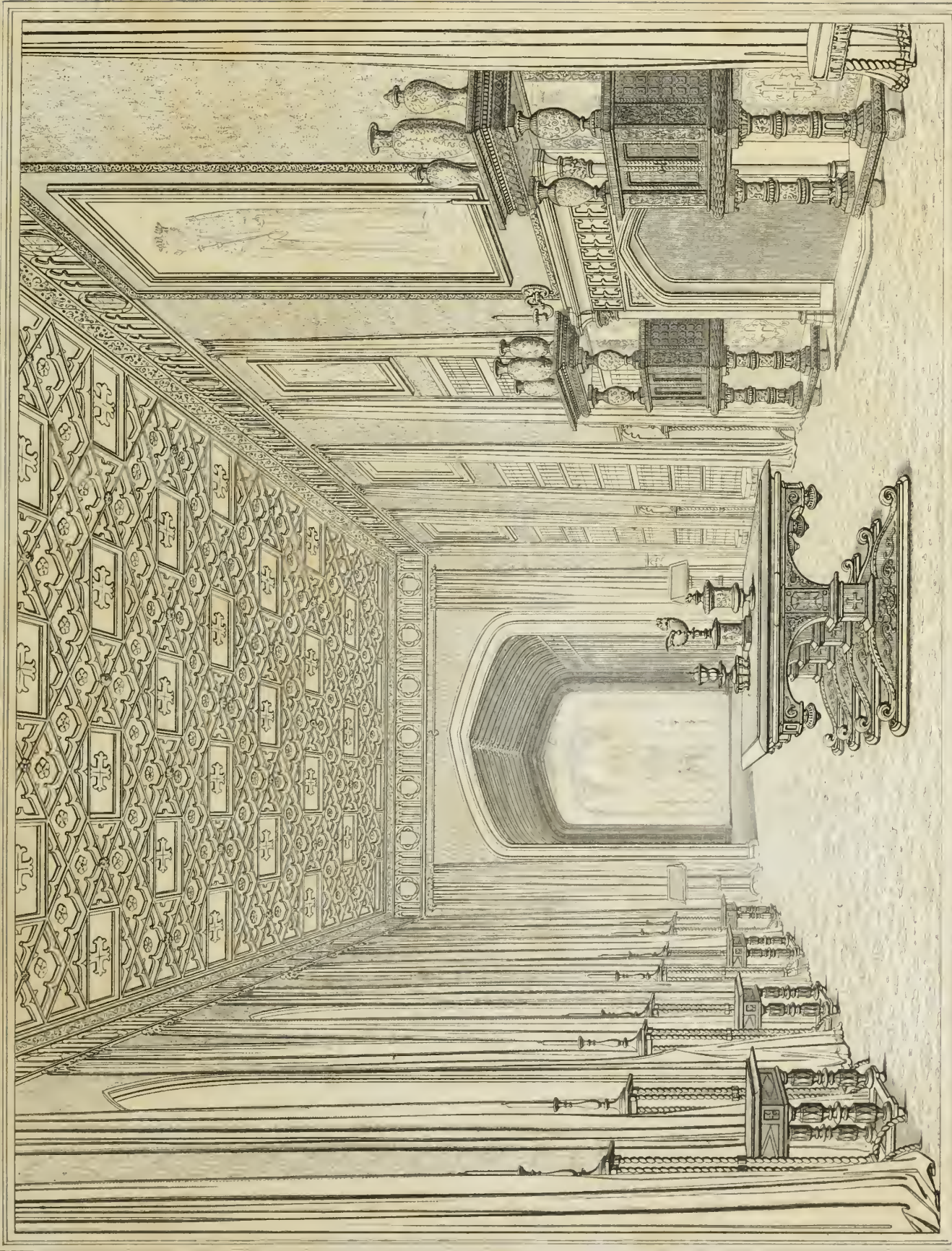


Figure 3 of J. B. Roussem's new system of architecture. The room is a library or study.

THE NEW SYSTEM OF ARCHITECTURE
BY J. B. ROUSSEAU
LONDON: Published by the Author, No. 1, Pall Mall.



CHAPTER IV. THE LIBRARY. THE LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, 1850.

PL. XI. The title page, has already been described.

The XIIth subject or print, from an engraving on wood, by an artist of talents and worth, is a view of the whole western range of buildings, as seen from the end of the long vista, or avenue, which extends from the great hall, about three quarters of a mile in a straight line.

The general dimensions or measurements, *internally*, of the building are, entrance hall, A. sixty-eight feet long by twenty-eight wide, and seventy-eight high. Of this area the stone stairs occupy a space of sixteen feet eight inches by thirty feet: area of the octagon, C. is thirty-five feet in diameter by one hundred and twenty-eight feet in height: D. circular staircase, twelve feet six inches in diameter, with a large newel in the centre, two feet six inches, containing a chimney flue. Edward's gallery is sixteen feet wide: and that of St. Michael thirteen feet seven inches, whilst the length of the whole is more than three hundred feet. The *exterior* measurements are two hundred and seventy feet from east to west, and three hundred and twelve feet from north to south; the centre tower is two hundred and seventy-six feet high from the floor to the top of the pinnacles: the new building, to the east, is forty-seven feet in width, by ninety-five feet six inches high to the top of the parapet, whilst the two octagonal turrets are one hundred and twenty feet high by twenty feet in diameter.

On reviewing the *Prints* just noticed, I am aware that they are not, in the whole series, equal to those I have generally had executed for the "Cathedral Antiquities." No one can feel and lament their imperfections more than myself; for it was my wish and intention to have each and all skilfully and tastefully engraved. I was not a little solicitous of rendering the whole correct and faithful; and wherever they may be found otherwise, I hope the critical reader will not attribute the blame to the author. For if incessant devotion to the subject, great anxiety and solicitude to please and deserve the approbation of the man of taste could have protected me, and rendered the series unexceptionable, the present volume would certainly have attained this desirable end. But the author and publisher of an embellished work is necessarily at the mercy of others: and as all persons have not the same

feelings—the same zeal—and the same responsibility, it is not surprising that there be carelessness in one—want of judgment in a second—defective taste in a third—and dishonesty in a fourth. No person, perhaps, has seen and felt these discrepancies of human intellect more than myself; and I can conscientiously aver, that no one can more sincerely have lamented their existence.

“ To err is human, to forgive divine.”

To my old and long tried friend MR. LE KEUX, I am particularly obliged and indebted for the labour and skill he has exercised on the plates committed to his care. I also render willing thanks to the artists who have executed the other plates in the volume, as I am convinced that each has done his best, and endeavoured to deserve the fame that waits on merit.

PREFACE.

ANXIOUS, as I ever have been, to deserve the confidence and conciliate the favourable opinion of my readers, I feel more than commonly so on the present occasion: for I am aware that where sanguine expectations have been raised, disappointment too frequently follows. Of Fonthill Abbey a feverish curiosity has been excited—the public eye and ear have been stimulated to excess—panegyric and enthusiastic animadversion have been disseminated through the country—several eloquent writers for the periodical press visited the Abbey in the autumn of 1822, for the express purpose of administering to and still further provoking that curiosity¹. Marvellous

¹ The present age is signalized and distinguished by the amazing number and variety of its *periodical publications*. These are circulated not only over the whole kingdom, but some of them are to be found in every portion of the civilized globe. Their influence must therefore be very great: and from the fluency of style and freedom of criticism by which they are now generally distinguished, they have produced, and must continue to produce, very powerful effects. Almost every one of the monthly, weekly, and daily magazines and papers contained something about Fonthill, whereby its notoriety was augmented, and public curiosity was stimulated. The daily press of London, and there is no other daily press in England, has its seasons,—its tides and ebbs,—its periods of business and of holiday; but the time of holiday, or ebb, is a time of difficulty, if not of labour. Such was the summer and autumn of 1822, when neither war nor political contention engrossed the public thought or the columns of the journals. The business of parliament was over—all Europe was at peace—and the overstocked hive of human population, London, began to send forth its swarms of fashionables, idlers, &c. to the shores of the sea, and to popular watering places. Fonthill soon attracted the swarm, and was filled to overflow, by the buzzing tribe. The press, that generally leads the public, deems it prudent sometimes to follow: and did so on the present occasion. It cannot be considered irrelevant or inappropriate to exemplify these remarks by adverting to some of the principal journals which contained original essays on Fonthill. First in the list, I believe, was “*The Literary Gazette*,” the acute and intelligent editor of which, eager to amuse and inform his readers, visited Fonthill, and devoted several columns in five papers of August and September to the subject. Next followed “*The London Museum*,” in eight weekly sheets of which are comments and criticisms on the Abbey and its contents, with remarks on several distinguished places in its vicinity. Most of these are evidently written by the lively and versatile pen of the learned author of several volumes on bibliography and bibliomania; and who, by his writings on the latter subject, has contributed more to increase than to cure the disease. This is not uncommon

tales of the place, and of its intellectual owner have been reiterated by the babbling tongue of rumour, and by the seducing pen of the essayist. Among such competitors the humble historian and scrupulous topographer has but little chance of obtaining applause, or even securing a patient hearing. His dress is too plain and homely, his action and tones too simple and unimpressive to be recognised amidst the gay, the volatile, the glittering throng. With this conviction in my mind, I have moved with caution and solicitude; for though I felt confident in the generous and liberal interpretation of friends, I was equally confident that envy and enmity were watching with lynx-like and basilisk-like eye to detect error, and to pounce on their victim.

By the advice of an eloquent and discriminating correspondent and friend, and whose counsel, as founded on the principles of good sense and good taste, must be useful, I have endeavoured to confine the following narrative

nor surprising; for Buchan's "Domestic Medicine," and other popular treatises, have created many disorders of an imaginary nature. Following these two literary papers just named, and chiefly made up from them, appeared several paragraphs in other daily and weekly journals. In five succeeding numbers of "*The Guardian*" was a series of essays by its eloquent editor, who has since devoted his powerful talents to "*The Quarterly Magazine*." In "*The Times*," "*New Times*," "*Morning Chronicle*," "*Morning Post*," and "*Morning Herald*," were several original articles, written expressly for the respective papers, and by literary gentlemen connected with each. These essays, though evidently penned on the "spur of the moment," and for the pages of the ephemeral press, manifest varied and highly cultivated minds. "*The Gentleman's Magazine*," particularly devoted to topography and biography, contained some papers on the architecture and heraldical embellishments of the Abbey; one on the first subject, by the skilful architect attached to Winchester Cathedral, and some on the latter from the scientific pen of the present Lancaster Herald. Though many other magazines contained miscellaneous paragraphs and memoirs on Fonthill, I believe that only one, "*The London*," was distinguished by an original article. The essay, in that popular and well written magazine, was truly so; as all the essays by the same writer are. Mr. Hazlitt has long been known in the literary world as an independent and intrepid author; and he displayed these qualities in an eminent degree in the essay alluded to. A passage from his paper will exemplify this remark:—"The difficult, the unattainable, the exclusive, are to be found here in profusion, in perfection; all else is wanting, or is brought in merely as a foil or as a stop-gap. In this respect the collection is as satisfactory as it is unique. The specimens exhibited are the best, the most highly finished, the most costly and curious of that kind of ostentatious magnificence which is calculated to gratify the sense of property in the owner, and to excite the wondering curiosity of the stranger, who is permitted to see or (as a choice privilege and favour) even to touch baubles so dazzling, and of such exquisite nicety of execution; and which, if broken or defaced, it would be next to impossible to replace."

and notes to the subject of Fonthill Abbey and its immediate connections. I have intentionally avoided topographical accounts of the adjoining villages, with descriptions of churches, &c. These, with descents of manors, tombstone inscriptions, and lists of incumbents, are the common materials of local history; and when properly and skilfully elucidated are useful for reference, and even readable by many persons. To the general student, and to such readers as are likely to admire the beauties and sublimities of nature and the higher works of art, such matter however is usually regarded as vapid and insipid. Hoping to obviate this inference here, and with a view of adapting my sentiments and language to the subject, and to the expectations of the refined class of readers, I have attempted a more florid style and tone than usually belong to topography. Admiring, as I do enthusiastically, the picturesque of scenery, and the charms of refined art, I *endeavour* to express my feelings strongly and appropriately, in the hopes of awakening a corresponding feeling and excitement in the person who honours me with perusal. If this be effected, my end is answered, and my most ardent wishes gratified; but if it be not, the failure must be ascribed to the want of power rather than the want of will.

As many of the purchasers of this volume may not be acquainted with my other literary works, and may be deterred from looking at them from prejudices against the dullness of antiquarian publications generally, I trust it will not be deemed impertinent or improper to state that although my historical and descriptive essays must necessarily contain some technicality of language, and cannot possess the interest and pathos of poetry, or of the well written novel, yet I have endeavoured to adapt the style and matter of those essays to almost every class of readers. In the histories of the *Castles* and *Antient Mansions* of the country (see Architectural Antiquities, vol. ii.) will be found many anecdotes and facts illustrative of the manners and customs of our ancestors; and the splendid and truly interesting *Cathedrals* of our island furnish abundant materials for illustrating the progress of the arts and sciences, the history of architecture and sculpture, and the influence of monastic rites and customs. Biographical anecdotes of

eminent and illustrious personages are necessarily connected with the subject. These are themes of no common or trivial nature, and can scarcely be said to be uninteresting or unimportant to any person. If an author properly appreciates them, and has talents to do justice to their varied characteristics, his writings, accompanied with scientific and picturesque illustrations, cannot fail of making lasting impressions on the feelings, fancy, and judgment of the reader.

As a record of obligation and thanks it is now my duty to notice the names of gentlemen who have contributed to the present volume, and thereby conferred favours on the author. But for repeated acts of polite attention, kindness, and approbation of my other literary works from Mr. BECKFORD, this volume had never been commenced; and to merit a continuation of the same friendly condescensions has been an object of constant solicitude during its tedious progress. His recommendation to the CHEVALIER FRANCHI, who enhanced the fascinations of Fonthill by repeated acts of personal courtesy and politeness, conferred on me a most essential obligation. The late ABBÉ MACQUIN was peculiarly solicitous about the prosperity of the present work; and I shall not readily forget his attentions in conducting me and my affectionate partner through the Abbey in the year 1817². Under the influence of a bright sun, with the furniture and decorations fresh, vivid, and disposed with tasteful attention to effect, the whole seemed more like a vision of fancy than a scene of reality: and to be indulged and honoured with such a fascinating treat, at a time when personages of the highest rank had been denied access, tended to enhance the obligation and increase the illusion in a tenfold degree. The event, the time, the associations of reality and

². After penning this paragraph I read, in "the London Museum" of July 26, with sorrowful emotion, an account of his death, with notices of some of his literary works. By this memoir it appears that he possessed varied and useful talents; that though educated in and professionally devoted to a church accused of intolerance and bigotry, he was perfectly exempt from those unchristian qualities; that he encountered many troubles and vicissitudes in the eventful French Revolution: and that he was at once a topographer, herald, artist, poet, and, "the noblest work of God," an honest man. Mr. Beckford saw and appreciated his worth, and treated him as a companion and a friend.

romance, of nature and art, can neither be forgotten nor described. To the obliging communications of Mr. BELTZ, Lancaster Herald, I am indebted for the principal heraldical and genealogical materials of this volume.

It would afford me much gratification to express thankfulness to other persons, from whom I had a right to expect friendly and useful cooperation; but, as I cannot award praise, I forbear to censure.

Rivalry in literature, as well as in the arts and in trade, is useful to the public; for it excites emulation and competition. I have encountered my share, and am prepared to meet more; though I have suffered, and must continue to suffer in the conflict. It will, however, be my ambition to continue to deserve as long as I continue to seek public approbation. It will also afford me much consolation in the evening of life to reflect that the spirit of competition thus roused has tended to give employment and energy to many artists and artisans, conferred honors on the meritorious and honest, but reduced those of opposite character to just disgrace. The candid, open rival I not only willingly compete with, but even applaud; for I wish to fulfil the maxim in its fullest sense, of "Doing to others as I would they should do unto me."

The reader who expects to meet with a Catalogue Raisonné, or list of the numerous works of art, fancy, and ingenuity belonging to Fonthill Abbey, and which in its time of publicity constituted part of its attraction and interest, will be disappointed; for I have purposely avoided entering on such an extensive and multifarious subject. They have been enumerated, and many of them characterized, in Mr. Christie's Sale Catalogue; and to copy the pages of that, or attempt to rival it, would neither be consistent with my feelings or be in unison with the general tenor of the ensuing pages. To Mr. Christie I am personally obliged, and if any sincere commendation of mine could either confer a favour on him, or afford him a moment's pleasure, it would give me equal pleasure to offer it: but his general urbanity, learning, and refined taste are well known to almost every person in this country who, like him, possess those estimable qualifications.

AN ADDRESS

TO

JOHN BROADLEY, ESQ. F. S. A. ETC.

OF SOUTH ELLA, YORKSHIRE.

You, my dear sir, are well acquainted with all the literary works of the author who now addresses you—know their general merits and defects, and are also familiar with the sentiments, situation, and circumstances of the humble individual who produced them. In his fortunes and misfortunes—pleasures and mortifications, you have manifested a friendly and generous sympathy. To no one, therefore, can he declare his opinions and avow his feelings more confidentially and freely than to yourself. Your friendship has been tried and proved; your patronage has been honourable to your head and heart: and it is anxiously hoped that the author has merited, and will continue to deserve it. Attached to the pleasures, to the luxuries of literature, you have stored your library with many of its choicest flowers: for you are well aware that these continue to preserve their delightful tints and fragrance in all seasons and in all ages. The eye and mind can perpetually turn to, and derive repeated enjoyments from the finer works of the pen and pencil, whilst corporeal pleasures are evanescent, and less within the control of the will. At a time when the chief amusements of many country gentlemen are in the chase, and the gun, feats of bodily activity, sottish indulgence, or the vulgar and degrading imitation of coachmen and boxers, you have fortunately and rationally sought amusement, and at the same time obtained pleasure and information, from the immortal productions of the best authors and artists. These, my esteemed friend, are the greatest benefactors of mankind; for they at once create an appetite for intellectual food and supply the table. Their viands never satiate, but on the contrary acquire increasing zest and

improving nutritiveness by repetition and indulgence. “The Pleasures of Memory,” “The Pleasures of Imagination,” and “The Pleasures of Hope” have been themes for three interesting English poems: and it cannot be doubted that the respective poets received, as they have also communicated, much intellectual pleasure in producing and reflecting on their respective productions. “The Pleasures of Taste” would afford an admirable subject for the harmonious and accomplished author of the poem first named: for he possesses an intimate knowledge of elegant literature and the fine arts, which may be regarded as equally the parents and the offspring of taste. The cultivation and possession of this refined faculty, this great attribute of moral and intellectual excellence, advances man in the scale of humanity, and exalts him above his fellow mortals. Every gradation of beauty, every variety of form, colour, and proportion is duly estimated and appreciated by him: he cultivates the best sources of pleasure for his own mental gratification, and imparts a corresponding feeling to his associates. A man of taste is, therefore, one of the greatest ornaments to society; having studied beauty and harmony, he perceives their highly commanding and fascinating powers, and consequently is averse to every thing vulgar, ugly, and discordant. True taste is the attribute of sensibility, of genius, and of wisdom: it hallows and adorns every thing it touches; it endows its possessor with a new and peculiar sense, or rather gives an additional power to all the other senses. If it were more cultivated among the higher classes of men, who by wealth and rank have so much influence on the fashions, manners, and morals of society, we should not so frequently be offended by inappropriate and common-place designs in our mansions, churches, and public buildings: we should find that genius and talent would be called into exercise, and rewarded; and that the fine arts of England would soon rival, if not surpass, the over praised productions of antient Greece and Italy. A laudable and enthusiastic ambition to excel will necessarily grow out of liberal and discriminating patronage: the examples of a Bedford, Devonshire, Stafford, Lansdowne, Essex, Grosvenor, Bridgewater, Spencer, Leicester, Long, Beckford, Hope, and others, who love and appreciate art, must improve the public taste, benefit the country, and reflect immortal honour on their respective names. Nothing will tend

more effectually to accomplish these desirable purposes, than the publication of such works as have lately been produced by the Duke of Bedford, and are preparing by the Earls of Bridgewater and Essex. Publications like these give energy and excitement to the author and artist,—bring them into intimate union and rivalry, and render the talents of the one illustrative of the other. Until the former studies and understands the fine arts, and the latter cultivates literature, they will fail to accomplish their high and commanding destinations.

Whate'er of Nature's pregnant stores,
 Whate'er of mimic Art's reflected forms,
 With love of admiration thus inflamed
 The powers of fancy, her delighted sons
 To three illustrious orders have referr'd;
 Three sister graces, whom the painter's hand,
 The poet's tongue confesses; the sublime,
 The wonderful, the fair.

Akenside's Pleasures of Imagination.

Reflecting on the spacious, novel, and extraordinary building of Fonthill and its splendid contents; remembering the intellectual society and studies of the founder; bearing also in mind the contents of your valuable library, and the associations connected with it, induced me to address this volume to you, and occasioned the remarks already made. It was my intention, at the commencement, to state how much I have been obliged and gratified by your possession of the copies of "*The Architectural Antiquities*," and "*The Cathedral Antiquities*," with proofs, etchings, and the *original drawings*: in the purchase of these unique works you have conferred an honour and favour on the author, and manifested a liberality of patronage which he reflects on with pleasure and acknowledges with gratitude. Monarchs and nobles in other ages and other countries might have coveted such collections, and have conferred and derived distinction in attaining them. In the present country and age it has been the enviable lot of a private gentleman to possess these works, and thereby to impress a lasting sense of obligation on

July 10, 1823.

THE AUTHOR.

FONTHILL ABBEY.

Chap. II.

ENGLISH MANSIONS :—DESCRIPTIVE NOTICES OF FONTHILL :—NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL CHARACTER OF THE PLACE AND ADJACENT COUNTRY :—THE OLD HOUSE, PARK, AND SCENERY :—LORD NELSON'S VISIT TO THE ABBEY :—ACCOUNT OF THE GROUNDS, ETC. WITHIN THE INCLOSURE.

THE mansions and parks of many of the English nobility and gentry are proper objects of curiosity and interest to the inquisitive traveller. Embellished and preserved as they are with laudable pride by their respective possessors, they become truly noble and imposing features of the country. Contrasted with the barren heath, the sterile moor, the monotonous plain, and the rugged mountain, they are replete with sweetness, beauty, and loveliness. They delight the eye and fascinate the senses. To the man of taste and man of the world they afford varied sources of pleasing and interesting reflections: to the middle and lower classes of society they become monitors and friends; for they afford them employment, support, and protection. Formerly they were often possessed by the haughty and tyrannical baron: now they are generally the abode of benevolence, urbanity, hospitality, and elegance. The country mansion usually displays the most distinguished architectural excellence; whilst its interior is adorned with the

choicest works of art and literature. In the pleasure grounds and parks are often seen some of the most beautiful and picturesque scenery of the island. True English comfort and English luxury are the characteristics of the Englishman's country seat: and nothing has tended more to adorn and enrich Great Britain than the distribution of these over its surface. From the Land's End in the west to the northern borders of Northumberland, they are not only numerous, but fine in feature and beneficial in effect. The notice of a few will serve to verify these remarks, and at the same time lead the mind to a due estimate of the seat which furnished the theme of the present volume. Passing the palaces of Windsor, Hampton Court, Kew, and Kensington, we may regard *Blenheim* as the first mansion of the country. It was the generous gift of our nation to reward and honour military talent and worth: and it cannot but excite the deepest regret that worth and talent are not hereditary. At *Blenheim* art and nature are exhibited on a grand scale: the house, the bridge, the extended park, the broad and irregular lake, and its forests of wood are picturesque, imposing, and sublime. *Castle Howard*, *Chatsworth*, *Holkham*, *Burleigh*, and *Longleat* are all great and noble: but each is distinguished from the others by its local features, peculiar beauties, and individual style of architecture. *Stowe* is justly noted for its extensive pleasure grounds, with the numerous temples, bridges, columns, and arches that adorn it; whilst *Trentham Hall*, *Tabley*, and *Cassiobury* are remarkable for their protection and display of works of English art, as well as for other beauties and excellences. The *Leasowes*, *Hagley*, *Piercefield*, *Hafod*, *Houghton*, and *Strawberry Hill* have been honoured and praised by their respective essayists and historians. *Woburn Abbey*, *Warwick Castle*, *Arundel Castle*, *Petworth*, and *Belvoir Castle* are all highly interesting, for their respective buildings and contents, as well as for the local scenery; and, like most of those already named, are accessible to the public. Salisbury has long been famed for the splendid and interesting seats in its vicinity. At *Lougford Castle* is a very fine collection of pictures, also a singular antient work of art, a steel chair, covered with a profusion of historical figures and groups in relief. *Wilton House* is enriched also with many curious and valuable paintings, and likewise a museum of antient

Greek and Roman sculpture. - *Longleat*, already named, is a magnificent edifice, seated in a noble park, and is also adorned with several valuable pictures. In its vicinity is *Stourhead*, long distinguished and much admired for its romantic and beautiful pleasure grounds, bold terraces, and treasures of art and literature contained within its spacious rooms. This seat demands a more particular tribute of applause from my pen, as containing a choice and valuable topographical library, and also many of the finer works of our native artists. At *Wardom Castle*, in the same part of Wiltshire, is a fine mansion, the ruins of an antient castle, and a collection of pictures: but the late mansion of FONTHILL, built by Alderman Beckford, and occupied for many years by his son, the present William Beckford, Esq. had long been regarded as the most attractive and splendid seat in the west of England. It was a handsome, uniform edifice, consisting of a centre of four stories, and two wings of two stories, connected by corridors, built of fine stone, and adorned with a bold portico, resting on a rustic basement, with two sweeping flights of steps: its apartments were numerous, and splendidly furnished. They displayed the riches and luxury of the east; and on particular occasions were superbly brilliant and dazzling. Whilst its walls were adorned with the most costly works of art, its sideboards and cabinets presented a gorgeous combination of gold, silver, precious metals, and precious stones, arranged and worked by the most tasteful and skilful artists and artisans. Added to these splendours, these dazzling objects, apparently augmented and multiplied by large and costly mirrors, was a vast, choice, and valuable library. This was dispersed in different rooms, and thus afforded the resident visitor endless and invaluable sources of amusement and instruction. Some idea may be formed of the extent, &c. of the house by the measurement of its great entrance hall, in the basement story, which was eighty-five feet ten inches in length, by thirty-eight feet six inches in breadth. Its roof was vaulted, and supported by large stone piers. One apartment was fitted up in the Turkish style, with large mirrors, ottomans, &c. whilst others were enriched with fine sculptured marble chimney-pieces, painted ceilings, and every thing luxurious. Splendid, however, as it was, and presenting as

it did such fascinations, it was placed in a low, damp, and unhealthy situation, on the margin of a broad lake, and at the base of a hill covered with woods. Dissatisfied with this situation, its proprietor doomed it to fall, and he dispersed, with nearly all its contents. The materials of the house alone was sold for ten thousand pounds. One wing is left standing. Fonthill at that time, as well as last year, was thronged with visitors. (See Gentleman's Magazine, vol. lxxi. p. 853.)

The park surrounding this house was diversified in surface and adorned by groves of fine old wood; whilst the lowest valley was occupied by a broad lake. On the east bank of this was a romantic but richly cultivated pleasure ground, with deep caves in the rocks, ornamental baths, grottoes, &c. Every thing around this mansion, and within its walls, manifested taste and luxury not twenty years back: now the scene is changed, as by the wand of enchantment; for on the site of the mansion we see the sheep nibbling the wild grass—instead of the choicest plants and flowers in the pleasure grounds, reared and guarded by art and labour, we meet with the entangling briar and rank weed. What was softness, smoothness, and beauty, is now abruptness, roughness, and deformity. Such is the picture of Fonthill House *that was*. It will now be my duty to portray Fonthill *that is*. The former is passed away, and would have been scarcely known but for the useful and perpetuating services of the pen and pencil. By the aid of these valuable implements we shall be enabled to transmit to distant countries and to remote ages the features and characteristics of

FONTHILL ABBEY. This mansion continued to be enveloped in mystery, and to be a theme of conjecture for many years, until the summer of 1822, when its gates and doors were opened to the public, and crowds of people from all parts of the island and from distant countries flocked to examine its features and investigate its contents. The house, lawns, groves, and glades, which had formerly been shut out from the gaze of strangers, were now thronged by multitudes of wondering and admiring visitors. In consequence of extraordinary depreciation of West Indian property and produce, whence Mr. Beckford had derived the greater part of his riches, and having expended

immense sums of money in building Fonthill Abbey, he was induced to offer a considerable part of its valuable contents to sale in that year. A catalogue was made out, and the whole confided to the disposal of Mr. Christie.

An extraordinary and unprecedented curiosity had been excited, and which can only be accounted for from the many marvellous stories circulated respecting the place—the amazing talents and faculties of its founder—the conspicuous and original aspect of the towers, &c. from distant parts, and the resolute determination of the proprietor in denying access to all inquirers and applicants: princes, dukes, and other nobles having vainly solicited admission within the walls, excited both wonder and curiosity; for whatever is difficult to attain, and rare in quality, is sought for and coveted with increased avidity. Determined to produce an edifice uncommon in design, and adorn it with splendour; knowing and properly appreciating the insatiable curiosity of the English, and that no common means would restrain it from breaking in upon domestic privacy, and encroaching on the regular occupation of artificers and workmen, Mr. Beckford commenced his works by raising a high wall around a tract of land above six miles in extent. This was guarded by projecting railing on the top, in the manner of *chevaux de frise*, and thus constituted a sort of fortified barrier. Large and strong gates, or rather double gates, were provided in this wall, at the different roads of entrance to the interior. At these gates were stationed persons who had strict and rigid orders not to admit a stranger. Thus provided and protected, and after many other preparations had been made, the foundation of the present building was laid in the year 1795. A vast number of mechanics and labourers were employed to advance the works with rapidity. The neighbouring villages were thronged with inhabitants, and a new village, or hamlet, was built to accommodate some of the new settlers. All around was activity and energy: whilst the growing works of the edifice, as the scaffolding and walls were raised above the surrounding trees, excited the curiosity and speculations of the passing traveller, as well as the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. It was generally inferred that something wonderful was in progress; for as the inclosed grounds were carefully guarded against the admission of strangers, these naturally became the more

inquisitive, and were the more vague, extravagant, and marvellous in their inferences and reports. To enhance this surprise, and afford new scope for this spirit of speculation, a novel scene was presented in the winter of 1800: during the dark and inclement season of November and December in that year, it is related that nearly five hundred men were successively employed night and day to expedite the works: and in the darksome and dreary nights of those months, they prosecuted their labours by torch and lamp light. The prospect of an illuminated edifice, as seen from a distance, with flitting lights and busy workmen, must have produced a singular and mysterious effect. This event was "harvest time" to the men employed; for if they worked hard they were amply repaid: and it is an unanswerable maxim that "reward sweetens labour."

The cause of this most extraordinary exertion and activity was a visit of Lord Nelson, with Sir William, Lady Hamilton, &c. to Fonthill. The "Hero of the Nile," as he was then called, and Lady Hamilton, had excited great notoriety: the one by his courage, naval skill, and conquests, and the other by her personal attractions and abilities. Mr. Beckford having invited them, with several other friends, to his splendid seat, first received and then treated them in an extraordinary manner; for the accomplished author of *Vathek* had determined to exemplify by practical illustration some of the theories of that original romance. If he had not five wings to his palace, or "five other palaces, for the particular gratification of each of the senses," he had concentrated within his own walls, and around his mansion, the most delightful blandishments of art, the fascinations of talent, and the choicest luxuries for the palate: besides the most rare and delicious viands, fruits, and wines, with odoriferous plants, flowers, and essences, some of the first vocal and instrumental performers were engaged, a military band was provided, the Fonthill volunteers were prepared and disciplined, the house was fitted up with increased splendour, and on the 20th of December, 1800, a large cavalcade was introduced to the mansion. In passing through Salisbury Lord Nelson was escorted into and out of that city by the yeoman cavalry, and was presented with the freedom of Sarum by the Mayor and Corporation in their council house assembled. The festivities at Fonthill

continued for some days, and the company consisted of persons of distinguished talents and qualifications. The abbey, or monastic fête, on the evening of the twenty-third, was the most remarkable period of this gala. A procession of carriages, horses, soldiers, &c. moved from the old house to the abbey in the evening. Flambeaux, torches, and many thousand lamps were distributed on the sides of the road among the woods; whilst bands of music and files of soldiers were stationed in different places to greet and charm the company as they passed. Every thing, indeed, was provided to steal upon the senses, to dazzle the eye, and to bewilder the fancy. After passing through a long, winding, umbrageous avenue—after hearing the sounds of distant, near, and varied instruments, with their reverberations among the woods and dells, and contemplating the vivid and solemn effects of bright flitting lights and deep shadows, the company was conducted to the abbey, where a new, impressive, and mystical scene, or succession of scenes, were presented. For an account of this I cannot do better than quote a letter, written at the time:—"After entering a groined gothic hall, through a double line of soldiers, the parties were received in the great saloon, called the cardinal's parlour, furnished with rich tapestries, long curtains of purple damask before the arched windows, ebony tables and chairs studded with ivory, of various but antique fashion; the whole room in the noblest style of monastic ornament, and illuminated by lights on silver sconces. At the moment of entrance they sat down at a long table, occupying nearly the whole length of the room (fifty-three feet), to a superb dinner, served in one long line of enormous silver dishes, in the substantial costume of the antient abbeys, unmingled with the refinements of modern cookery. The table and sideboard glittered with piles of plate, and a profusion of lights, not to mention a blazing Christmas fire of cedar, and the cones of pine which united to increase the splendour and to improve the *coup-d'œil* of the room. It is needless to say that the highest satisfaction and good humour prevailed, mingled with sentiments of admiration at the grandeur and originality of the entertainment. Dinner being ended, the company moved up stairs to the other finished apartments of the abbey. The staircase was lighted by certain mysterious living figures, at different intervals, dressed in hooded gowns,

and standing with large wax torches in their hands. A magnificent room, hung with yellow damask, and decorated with cabinets of the most precious japan, received the assembly. It was impossible not to be struck, among other objects, with its credences (or antique buffets), exhibiting much treasure of wrought plate, cups, vases, and ewers of solid gold. It was from this room that they passed into the library, fitted up with the same appropriate taste. The library opens by a large gothic screen into the gallery, which when finished will be more than two hundred and seventy feet long. About half this length is now fitted up and furnished in the most impressive monastic style. A superb shrine, with a beautiful statue of St. Anthony in marble and alabaster, the work of Rossi, placed upon it, with reliquaries studded with brilliants of immense value, the whole illuminated with a grand display of wax lights, on candlesticks and candelabras of massive silver, gilt, exhibited a scene at once strikingly splendid and awfully magnificent. The long series of lights on either side of the room, resting on stands of ebony, enriched with gold, and those on the shrine all multiplied and reflected in the great oriel opposite from its spacious squares of plate glass, while the whole reflection narrowed into an endless perspective as it receded from the eye, produced a singular and magic effect.

“ As the company entered the gallery a solemn music struck the ear from some invisible quarter, as if from behind the screen of scarlet curtains which backed the shrine, or from its canopy above, and suggested ideas of a religious service; ideas which, associated as they were with so many appropriate objects addressed to the eye, recalled the grand chapel scenes and ceremonies of our antient Catholic times. After the scenic representation a collation was presented in the library, consisting of various sorts of confectionary, served in gold baskets, with spiced wines, &c. whilst rows of chairs were placed in the great room beyond, which had first received the company above stairs. A large vacant space was left in front of the seats. The assembly no sooner occupied them than Lady Hamilton appeared in the character of Agrippina, bearing the ashes of Germanicus in a golden urn, and as presenting herself before the Roman people with the design of exciting them to revenge the death of her husband; who, after having been

declared joint emperor by Tiberius, fell a victim to his envy, and is supposed to have been poisoned by his order at the head of the forces which he was leading against the rebellious Armenians. Lady Hamilton displayed with truth and energy every gesture, attitude, and expression of countenance which could be conceived in Agrippina herself, best calculated to have moved the passions of the Romans in behalf of their favourite general. The action of her head, of her hands and arms in the various position of the urn, in her manner of presenting it before the Romans, or of holding it up to the gods in the act of supplication, was most classically graceful: every change of dress, principally of the head, to suit the different situations in which she successively presented herself, was performed instantaneously, with the most perfect ease, and without retiring, or scarcely turning aside a moment from the spectators. In the last scene of this beautiful piece of pantomime, she appeared with a young lady of the company, who was to personate her daughter: her action in this part was so perfectly just and natural, and so pathetically addressed to the spectators, as to draw tears from several of the company. It may be questioned whether this scene, without theatrical assistance of other characters and appropriate circumstances, could possibly be represented with more effect. The company, delighted and charmed, broke up and departed, at eleven o'clock, to sup at the mansion house.

“On leaving this strange nocturnal scene of vast buildings and extensive forest, now rendered dimly and partially visible by the declining lights of lamps and torches, and the twinkling of a few scattered stars in a clouded sky, the company seemed, as soon as they had passed the sacred boundary of the great wall, as if waking from a dream, or just freed from the influence of some magic spell¹.”

If the Abbey of Fonthill was susceptible of such effects in an early stage of its erection, it must now be greatly enhanced in capability and consequence; for it is at least four times larger than it was at the time of that fête. Before I proceed to describe the present fabric, it will be expedient to make a few remarks on its situation and surrounding scenery.

¹ Gentleman's Magazine, vol. lxxi. p. 297, &c. This account was probably written by Mr. Tresham, R. A.

The site of the abbey is a lofty terrace, having an abrupt descent to the south, a continued but irregular surface to the east and west, and terminating each way with a high knoll and steep ridge. Northward the ground slopes more gently; but from the natural height of situation, and the altitude of the edifice, it is seen from a considerable distance in every direction. Its towers also command very extensive and diversified views: to the south are seen the woods and buildings of Wardour Castle, terminated by a long bare ridge of the plain, or downs: southwestward the eye ranges over the rugged sandy knoll of Donhead; beyond is the town of Shaftesbury, and an extensive tract of Dorsetshire. Immediately to the west are descried the irregular grounds of East and West Knoyle, also the town of Mere, backed by the fine woods of Stourhead. A little to the northward the eye embraces an extensive range of Somersetshire, with the vast woods about Longleat. Directly to the north is seen the borough town of Hindon, with extensive but flat tracts of down country: contrasted to which, looking eastward, the eye dwells with delight on a broad fertile valley, abounding with woods, enlivened with seats and villages, and enriched with the manufacturing town of Wilton, and the interesting city of Salisbury. Such are the general objects and features surrounding, but at some distance from, the Abbey. Immediately within the domain, and within the walled inclosure, there is much diversified, picturesque, beautiful, and romantic scenery—an alternation of hill and dale, of terrace and valley, of wood and lawn, of rugged wildness and dressed parterres, with a sort of mountain lake, are the distinguishing features of the place. As variety is ever pleasing to the eye and mind, both must be gratified here: for the various inequalities of the ground have been rendered more intricate and mazy by the disposition of plantations and multiplicity of intersecting and winding drives.

To particularize all the features and characteristics of the varied grounds and scenery of this domain would require a very extended essay; and however extensive and apposite in language, it would probably fail in doing justice to the subject or to the writer's feelings. Descriptive language is rarely satisfactory to the reader. A Milton, a Scott, a Byron, a Radcliffe, and a Woolstonecroft have rendered it impressive and interesting: but these

admired authors have generally adorned *their* scenery with the flowers of rhetoric, and have made it fascinating by the personages connected with it, and by the varied lights and shades of fancy. To notice the numerous roads, paths, ridges, dells, knolls, woods, and lawns, within the inclosed area of the Fonthill grounds, would certainly serve to extend the pages of this volume, and would also afford ample scope for the exercise of description: but fearing it would be tedious and prolix to the reader, I decline attempting it.

In addition to what has been already said respecting the scenery it may be remarked generally, that great diversity of outline and inequality of surface, long terraces, steep ridges, conical knolls or hills, with winding vales and narrow glens, are its natural and distinguishing features: which are diversified and enriched by a profusion of woods, resembling forests.

There are two Roads of approach to the Abbey, each dissimilar to the other, and each remarkable for its romantic and picturesque character: that from the north-east, or from the town of Hindon, winds round the side and gradually ascends the slope of a hill. This eminence, of an amphitheatrical form, is covered with woods of varied character and age, and forms a solemn background to several cottages, which are dispersed on its side. These, with some very grand old elm and ash trees, and a winding road, present a variety and succession of romantic and picturesque scenes which cannot fail to interest and gratify the eye of the artist, and remind him alternately of Poussin and Ruysdael, of Salvator and Wilson, of Gainsborough and Turner. A wild and rather mountainous character pervades this approach to the Abbey; whilst true rusticity and active husbandry mark the appearance and manners of the inhabitants. The eye does not detect any of the gay and polished appendages of splendour: even the gates of entrance to the grounds and the lodge, or rather cottage of the keeper, are plain and common. After passing these the road is very steep and rugged, overhung and skirted by a forest of large, old, and picturesque trees; some shooting their thin stems towards the firmament in straight, perpendicular, and tapering forms; whilst others are seen spreading their curved and twisted branches in thousands of fantastic shapes. At the distance of about a quarter of a mile from the gates just noticed, the visitor emerges from this umbrageous road, and

comes almost close upon the building. This point has been already noticed. (See p. 2, and Plate IV.)

The other road of approach from the old park, and after passing the village inn, is very dissimilar to that just described. It is about a mile in length, and is carried over very undulating grounds, and through a romantic wood, which, in places, seems almost impervious to the eye and to the sun. In a dell, about midway between the first entrance to this wood and the mansion, is a second gate similar to that mentioned at the other approach. Hence to the Abbey is a gentle regular ascent through woods, and joining the former road near the east end of the building.

Previous to commencing an examination and account of the Abbey itself, I apprehend that some readers will expect further notices of the grounds and scenery. From a distance, in every direction, the whole appears an eminence covered with woods: but by traversing the various rides within these woods, we find a few small open spaces, with numerous dells and valleys. About a mile west of the Abbey is the highest point of ground, called *Beacon Hill*, or *Cliffe*, on which is the foundation of a triangular tower, intended to have been raised to a considerable height, and which then would have formed a conspicuous object from distant parts of Dorsetshire, Somersetshire, and Wiltshire. To the south and west of this is a very steep ridge, covered with forest trees, and near the base of the hill is a small lawn, surrounded by Alpine shrubs and firs, and adorned with a Norway cottage. Here the solitary hermit might retreat from the busy world, with all its cares, and its jealousies, and its charms, to meditate on the past, the present, and the future. It seems the poet's and painter's solitude; but the solitude of cheerfulness, not of gloom. To the north-west of Beacon Hill, and after crossing a narrow forest road, is a winding drive through Riddle Moor-woods, about two miles in length, to a bold commanding promontory, called *Knogle-corner*: near this are some moss-houses, and different avenues cut through the woods. One of these forms a grand natural cursus, and conducts the stranger to the east along the *Great Terrace*, skirted by a belt of plantations to the north, and by a long narrow valley to the south. The inclosed Abbey-grounds rise gradually from this valley, covered with woods, in which

we perceive alternate masses of oak, beech, pine, &c. From amidst these the turrets, towers, and pinnacles of the Abbey are seen to rise, at once crowning the eminence, and presenting from different points of view, and under the ever changing effects of light and shade, a succession of beautiful and interesting pictures. Intersecting and beneath one part of this terrace is the public road from Hindon to Fonthill, &c. The drive here descends to the bottom, and passes by three or four regular landshuts (as called in Wiltshire) or natural terraces, rising one above the other². Near this spot are the kitchen gardens, with extensive hot and green houses, filled with the choicest and most luxurious fruits and flowers.

Returning to the Abbey-grounds we have to notice one of the most attractive and, to many visitors, the most interesting places within their precincts: this is the *American plantations*, near the bottom of a hill, directly south of the Abbey, and on the bank of Bittern-lake. All visitors must be delighted with this spot in fine weather; for here grows, in apparent native wildness, almost every kind of the American flowering shrub and tree. The magnolia, azalia, rhododendron-ponticum, coccinea-aurantina, coccinea-major-flammea, rosa-carolinensis, calicanthus-floridus, angelica, robinia-latifolia, with different species of andromeda, abound here; and, in the flowering season, perfume the air with their spicy effluvia:

“ While groves of Eden, vanish'd now so long,
Live in description, and look green in song.”

The luxuriance of the shrubs and trees in this part of the grounds, the wildness of some spots contrasted with the smoothness and softness of others, the shape and undefined borders of the lake, all conspire to render it interesting to every person; but more peculiarly so to the artist and

² Some visionary antiquaries have fancied these landshuts to be artificial, and to have been formed by our ancestors in times of warfare; but this irrational theory, as well as that of attributing the small circular hollows in the granites of Cornwall, &c. to the Druids, as basins to hold the blood of slaughtered victims, is scarcely deserving of philosophical comment or argument. Having carefully and sceptically examined both these subjects, I am persuaded they are referable to natural causes only; and therefore satisfactorily and rationally to be accounted for.

botanist. A profusion of English and foreign heaths are planted on the sides of the paths. In a deep hollow, apparently the crater of a volcano, is a *Lake* which, though of small extent, is a fine feature of the grounds, whether viewed from the Abbey, from various stations among the woods, or from different parts of its banks. The latter are skirted and fringed with woods, whose pendent branches hang over, are reflected in, and kiss the rippled wave. Flocks of wild ducks, cootes, &c. with the long necked heron, abound here in all seasons, and serve at once to diversify and give interest to the scene³. In a narrow dell, at the southern extremity of this lake, is a large wheel with attached hydraulic machines for forcing water up the hill to supply the house.

³ A print of the Abbey from this lake is engraved for No. X. of Havell's "*Views of Seats*;" in which work are Views and Accounts of Longleat, Corsham House, and Stourhead, in this county.

Chap. II.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRINCIPAL PARTS OF THE BUILDING, WITH REFERENCE TO THE
ACCOMPANYING PRINTS :—VIZ. GENERAL REMARKS :—THE HALL :—THE OCTAGON :
—EDWARD THE THIRD'S GALLERY :—ORATORY :—THE LANCASTER ROOMS :—
ST. MICHAEL'S GALLERY :—THE DRAWING ROOMS :—CABINET ROOMS, ETC.

“ Towers and battlements it sees,
Bosom'd high in tufted trees.” MILTON.

THE accompanying prints will furnish the stranger with general ideas of the arrangement, extent, style, and effects of the edifice called Fonthill Abbey. To the persons who have examined it, who have admired, or have disapproved it, either in the whole or in parts, these representations will serve to revive pleasurable sensations, or afford materials for comment and censure. That a building of such magnitude, erected by a person of vast wealth and talents, and seen under such various prepossessions of partiality and prejudice, should be the subject of opposing and contradictory criticism is not surprising: it is more remarkable that it has been so generally panegyricized. Had the redoubtable “knight errant” who opposed all “architectural innovation”¹ seen the building, he would have buckled on his armour, rested his

¹ The late Mr. *John Carter*, an enthusiastic admirer of the antient architecture of England, continued a series of papers, for many years, in the “Gentleman’s Magazine,” under this title: in which he severely animadverted on and reprobated all new “gothic” works that were not built in rigid conformity to old specimens. Though I have always admired his enthusiasm and

lance, and spurred his charger to the desperate rencontre: he would have thrust at every weak point—and aimed some deadly blows at the architect: for he would have detected many parts that were not faithfully copied from famed standard examples. Such neglects were the “dragons” which excited his vengeance; and the architect of Fonthill Abbey was consequently often assailed by him.

Accustomed as I have been for many years to examine minutely and critically the cathedrals and finest churches of the country—to analyze their many parts and beauties—investigate their principles of construction and endless varieties of form, detail, and effect, I could easily write a volume of comment and criticism on the building now under notice: but however well such a volume might be written, however plausible the tone of argument, and sound the opinions, I am doubtful of its utility, and am not at all inclined to undertake the task. It is true that errors and bad taste in every department of art are proper subjects for literary animadversion; and that a public edifice, as well as pictures and statues, submitted to public exhibition, or a published book, is and ought to be amenable to the canons of criticism; but I cannot forget, or be insensible of, the sound axiom of Pope, that

“Ten censure wrong for one who writes (or designs) amiss.”

It is easy to cavil, it is the easiest of all species of writing,—as of all flippant conversation or talk, it is very easy to find fault: but it is difficult to administer just and discriminating praise. It is also an arduous and delicate task to appreciate all the varieties and grades of merit which belong to a novel work of art. Every novelty not only occasions comment, but almost invariably provokes censure; for envy and jealousy have too much ascendancy in

devotion to the subject, I cannot coincide in his opinions. Had the architects of the reigns of Henry the Third and of Edward the First, or those of Henry VI. and VII. been influenced by this principle, we never should have been indulged and delighted with that infinite variety, those numerous beauties and rarities of antient architecture which now tend so much to gratify every lover of the subject, and which afford such distinguishing and interesting ornaments to the country.

the human breast. Without, therefore, animadverting on the faults or incongruities of the building of Fonthill, and without pointing out its deviations from genuine examples, it will be most accordant to my feelings, and in unison with my general maxims, to describe it “as it is.”

From the annexed plan and views, from what has been already said, and what remains to be noticed, it is evident that Fonthill Abbey is an unique building²; that it is large and lofty, of varied forms, styles, and character; that many of its parts are designed more for effect than mere domestic utility; and that externally and internally it presents a succession of scenes which cannot fail to produce powerful impressions on the imagination. It may be easily supposed that the author of *Vathek*, with a vivid fancy, a mind stored with information from extensive travel, and more extensive reading, and with a vast fortune, would not be satisfied with any thing of commonplace or even usual character. He would require novelty, grandeur, complexity, and even sublimity; and it may be safely asserted, that no style or class of architecture is so well adapted to effect these purposes as the gothic, or ecclesiastical. This affords a boundless scope to fancy, is susceptible of endless forms and combinations, is calculated to be either beautiful or romantic, elegant or sublime. The ecclesiastical architects of the middle ages knew its capabilities, and frequently employed them in furtherance of these views. A reference to the many splendid cathedrals and monastic churches on the continent and in England, will verify these remarks. With multitudes of columns and arches, pinnacles and buttresses, crypts below,

² Gilpin, whose many volumes on “*Picturesque Beauty*,” &c. are replete with eloquent writing and sound criticism, has the following strange note in his “*Observations on the Western Part of England*,” written about 1778, and published in 1798, “Since this was written,” *i. e.* a few lines about Fonthill, “I have been informed that Fonthill hath been much improved; particularly that a *cathedral* hath been built of the full dimensions of a *genuine one*. As Mr. Wyatt was the architect, it must be a noble edifice; and, if it be properly stationed, it must be a grand decoration.” Never, perhaps, was a stranger jumble of ideas and language put in a smaller compass; and I can only account for its appearance by supposing that the compositor inserted it after the proof sheet had been returned by the author. In the course of my literary labours I have suffered by the *improvements* and *corrections*, as called, of an insolent printer in this way.

and long galleries above, tombs of monarchs, knights, and prelates of high historic renown, and with painted windows

“ Casting a dim religious light,”

that mind must be dull, phlegmatic, and vapid indeed that can wander through them unmoved, or not be roused to some degree of admiration and enthusiasm.

Plates II. III. IV. and V. serve to display the external disposition and forms of the building; but these, like miniatures, are only indications or hints to the mind, through the medium of the eye. The architect and artist reads and understands them, as a musician extracts harmony from lines and notes; and the person who has viewed the building, from the same points, is immediately reminded of the impressions and associations made on the spot. Hence the utility and value of faithful engravings or drawings of interesting buildings and scenes.

“ Crowning a gradual hill the mansion rose
In antient English grandeur: Turrets, spires,
And windows, climbing high from base to roof
In wide and radiant rows, bespoke its birth
Coeval with those rich cathedral fanes
(Gothic ill named) where harmony results
From disunited parts; and shapes minute,
At once distinct and blended, boldly form
One vast majestic whole.”———

Mason's English Garden.

Fonthill Abbey may be said to consist of five great portions or members, each of which contains several subdivisions: 1. the hall:—2. the central tower:—3. the north wing:—4. the eastern portion:—and 5. the south wing. The *entrance hall*, or grand vestibule, is a large and lofty apartment: it is entered by a spacious door-way, with a pointed arch, and to which are attached a pair of tall folding doors, with a small door inserted. These

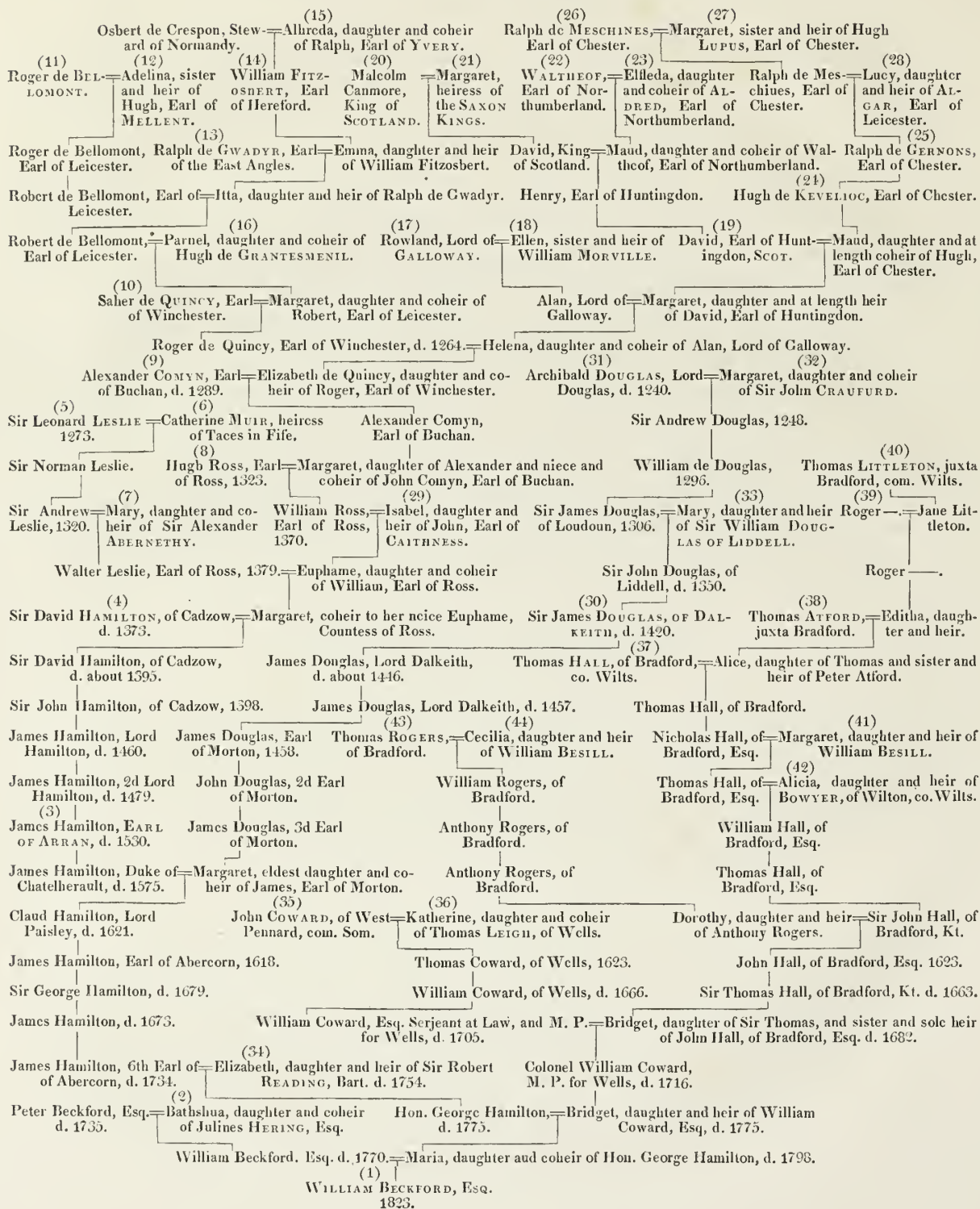
doors are thirty feet high, divided by ribs or mouldings, studded with nails, and supported by ponderous hinges. The hall measures sixty-eight feet long, by twenty-eight feet wide, and seventy-eight in height. The annexed print (Plate VI.) shews its principal decorations and style. Three tall windows, on the south side, with stained glass by Eginton, serve to give light to the interior, and a small window, with stained glass, is inserted near the top of the gable. "The coup-d'œil of the hall," says the Literary Gazette, "is indescribably fine." The intelligent writer in the Gentleman's Magazine, already referred to, says, "The lofty western portal, whether viewed from without or from the floor of the hall, may with some propriety be considered disproportionately high, but view it from the floor of the octagon, and it will be found that any diminution of its height would destroy one of the finest effects produced in this stately edifice. It will also be acknowledged that the ease with which the ponderous doors are said to turn on the hinges is not the only merit to be ascribed to them." They seem, indeed, "The gates of monarchs," and are

" Arch'd so high that giants may jet through,
And keep their impious turbans on."

The references in the ground plan have been already noticed; and the numerous *armorial decorations* on the cornice and on the timber roof in this apartment are specified in the following table, which refer to the several heiresses from whom Mr. Beckford derives the privilege of quartering them.

TABLE I.

THE PRINCIPAL QUARTERINGS OF WILLIAM BECKFORD, ESQ. IN THE GREAT HALL.



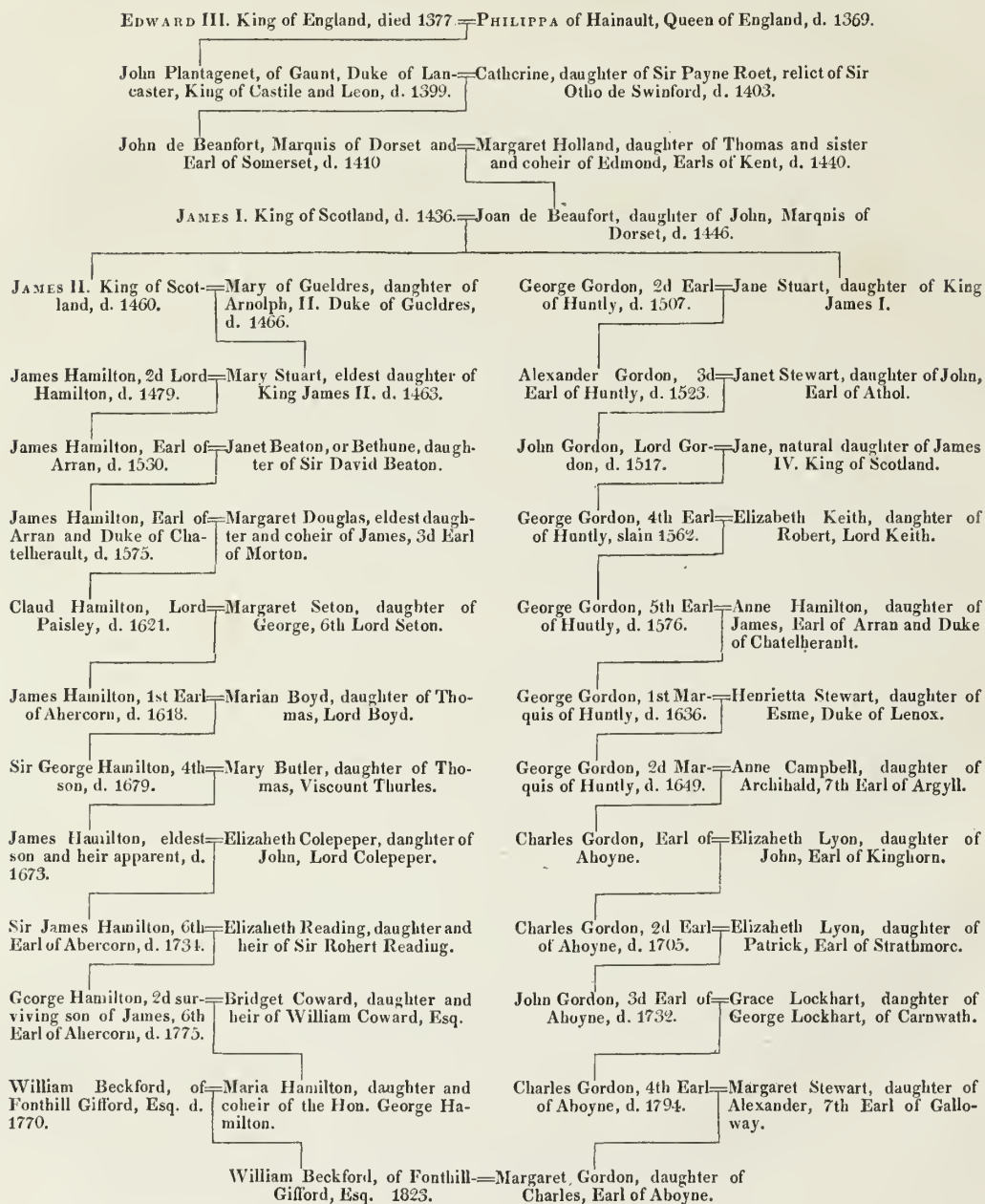
Ascending by a flight of twenty-two steps, guarded by a stone balustrade on each side, we approach through a small but lofty vestibule, the *octangular apartment, saloon, or louvre*, beneath the central tower: this presents a magnificent and imposing scene, or rather series of scenes, and is on a scale and in harmony with the spacious entrance hall. Standing in the centre, and looking up to the north, east, south, and west, the stranger will perceive a succession and variety of objects and effects, which cannot fail of pleasing, surprising, and delighting. One of these scenes is portrayed in Pl. VI. Eight piers, composed of clustered demicolumns, with eight tall narrow arches, of eighty feet in height, constitute the first story, or lower division. Four of these arches, to the east, west, north, and south, respectively communicate to the dining-room, the hall, Edward's gallery, and St. Michael's gallery. The four other spaces, between the piers, have corresponding arches, with recesses in the wall, occupied by tall windows above, of bright stained glass, and scarlet curtains of ample folds beneath: above the arches is an open gallery, with a perforated stone balustrade. This gallery is approached by the great circular staircase at the north-west angle, and communicates to four small sitting-rooms, over which are corresponding bed-rooms. This division of the tower is called *the nunneries*, because the nuns choir, in some female convents, was a gallery placed above the public congregation. The triforium or gallery between the roof of the ailes and clere story is often, but without any meaning, called the nunneries³. Springing from the capitals of eight lofty columnar shafts, at the angles of the octagon, is a series of diverging groins, or ribs, which support a lanthorn, and another groined roof. Four sides of this octagonal room are shown in Pl. VII.

North of the octagonal saloon, as shewn in the plan, is a long narrow room, divided into three compartments, and respectively called the *Gallery of Edward III.* marked D. in the plan: the vaulted corridor, E. and the sanctuary, or oratory, F. The first, or Edward's gallery, is so named from a series of splendid armorial emblazonments, which mark the numerous descents of Mr. Beckford and Lady Margaret Gordon from that monarch. In the subjoined Table these descents and connections are displayed.

³ See Glossary in vol. ii. of Pugin's "Specimens of Gothic Architecture."

TABLE II.

DESCENT OF WILLIAM BECKFORD, ESQ. AND OF THE LADY MARGARET GORDON, HIS WIFE, FROM KING EDWARD THE THIRD, FOUNDER OF THE MOST NOBLE ORDER OF THE GARTER.



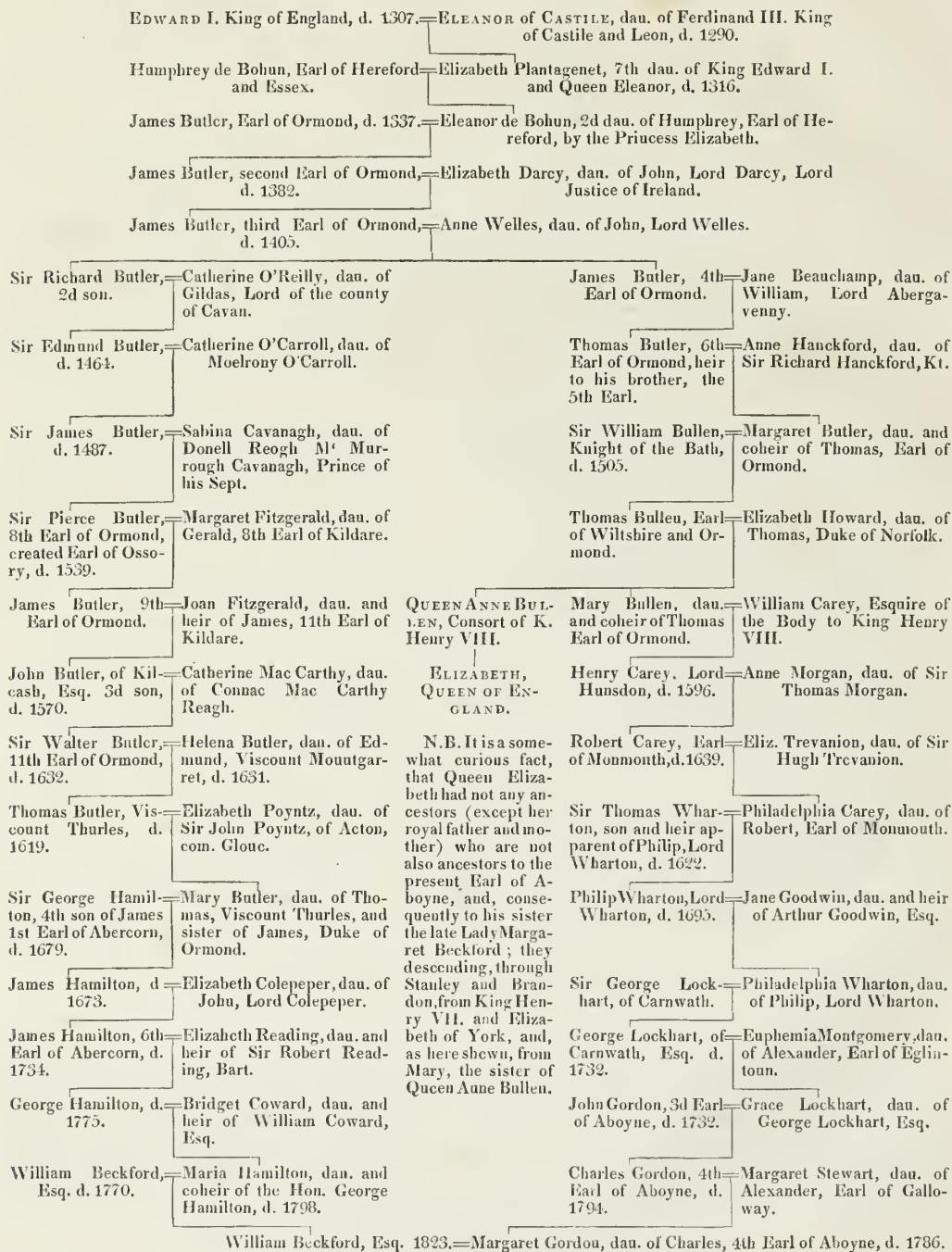
A full length portrait of Edward the Third, copied from one at Windsor, and seventy-two emblazoned shields round the frieze, of knights companions of the most noble order of the garter, and from whom Mr. Beckford and his lady are lineally descended, are parts of the adornments of this splendid gallery. In the recesses of the eastern wall are six bookcases, and in the centre a fine alabaster chimney-piece; opposite to, and corresponding with which are seven pointed windows, with stained glass. A flowered red damask is hung against the walls; purple and scarlet cloth adorn the windows and recesses, whilst the ceiling is ornamented with numerous pannels and mouldings, intersecting each other in rich and picturesque confusion. On each side of the fire-place is a cabinet, carved in imitation of the style of the Elizabethan age, in which singularity if not beauty of design is as conspicuous as extreme labour and excellence of execution. A series of black tables and candelabras is ranged on the side of the room, between the windows, whilst an interesting and costly Mosaic Table⁴, formed of the most precious agates and marbles, is shewn in the centre.

The *Corridor*, E. or approach to the oratory, is a continuation of the Edward Gallery, and is designed to produce a solemn and gloomy effect. The ceiling is arched over, and, with the sides, covered with numerous gilt and painted ribs and pannels. Three perforated bronze doors, on each side, communicate with mysterious recesses, somewhat resembling monastic confessionals. A doorway from the eastern recess leads to the Lancaster staircase tower, G. which forms one approach to an upper gallery, and leads to bedrooms in the tower above. Around the frieze of the corridor are thirty-eight emblazoned shields, marking Mr. Beckford's and his late Consort's descents from King Edward I. through the house of *Butler*, as exemplified in the following genealogical table.

⁴ This splendid table consists of a large slab, nine feet by four feet six inches, placed on a carved oak stand, or frame of four uprights, with as many feet. The slab, called "pietre com-messe," is ornamented with an oval compartment in the centre, of mammillated oriental onyx, surrounded by specimens of rare and beautiful jaspers and breccia, "and with a broad border of bold arabesque, of various costly and uncommon marbles, and edged with variegated marble." This slab formerly belonged to the Borghese Palace in Rome.

TABLE III.

SHewing THE DESCENT OF WILLIAM BECKFORD, ESQ. AND OF LADY MARGARET GORDON, HIS WIFE, THROUGH THE ILLUSTRIOUS HOUSE OF BUTLER, AND BY AN EQUAL NUMBER OF GENERATIONS, FROM KING EDWARD THE FIRST.



North of the corridor is a square apartment called the *Sanctuary*, with a flat ceiling, having several divisions of fan groining, with gilt pendants. This room is peculiarly beautiful and impressive: it prepares the eye and mind to approach and appreciate the *Oratory* (F.) at the northern extremity of the gallery. This is formed of five sides of an octagon, with gilt columns at the angles, from which spring a succession of fan-shaped ribs, with a circular compartment in the centre. A richly chased golden lamp is suspended from this. At the east end rises an altar, spread with a Persian carpet of figured silk; on which stands a marble statue of St. Anthony of Padua, executed by Rossi with admirable taste and unaffected simplicity. On each side of the altar are placed lofty candelabras, supporting tapers of extraordinary size; whilst two small lancet windows, filled with stained glass, admit a little glimmering many coloured light. The union of beauty and solemnity, of softness, repose, and harmony, which pervade this part of the building, cannot be adequately described; nor can it scarcely be imagined by those visitors who have seen it only in its days of bustle and gaiety. When dimly illumined by the rays of its own simply elegant lamp, which

“ through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom;”

and by the admission of variegated gleams from the small windows, alternately throwing vivid touches of brightness and deep shadow on the projections and recesses of the statue, and the gilt mouldings;—when the windows of the adjoining gallery are shrouded by their crimson, purple, and gold draperies, and the soft solemn organ sends its mellow tones through the echoing galleries, whilst the odours of eastern perfumes contribute their fragrance to feast another sense, it is more easy to fancy than to depict the seraphic influence of such a scene.

Ascending by the Lancaster tower at g, or the larger staircase at e, the stranger is conducted to a floor over the Edward gallery, consisting of a *state bedroom*, a gallery crowded with curious enamels, and pictures

by early masters, and a tribune. The first is a square apartment, having a handsome oriental alabaster chimney-piece, a large oriel window, facing the west, and an ebony bedstead and furniture, part of which belonged to King Henry the Seventh. Around the richly carved frieze are the royal badges of the red rose and portcullis, in allusion to Mr. Beckford and his late Consort, the Lady Margaret Gordon's "almost innumerable descents" from the *House of Lancaster*; some of the most remarkable of which are exemplified in the two following Tables.

SHEWING SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL DESCENTS OF WILLIAM BECKFORD, ESQ. FROM THE HOUSE OF LANCASTER.

Joan Plantagenet, 3d dan.
married John, Lord Mow-
bray.

Richard Fitzalan,
Earl of Arundel.

Eleanor Plantage-
net, 4th daughter.

John de Beau-
mont.

Mary Plantagenet,
5th dau. mar. Hen-
ry, Lord Percy.

Maud Plantagenet,
2d dau. mar. Wil-
liam de Burgh, Earl
of Ulster.

John, Lord Mowbray.

Henry, Lord Beaumont.

Henry Percy,
Earl of Nor-
thumberland.

Lionel of An-
twerp, Duke
of Clarence,
son of K. Ed-
ward III.

Elizabeth de
Burgh, dau.
and heir.

Thomas Mow-
bray, Duke of
Norfolk.

Eleanor Mow-
bray, mar. John,
Lord Wells.

Thomas Hol-
land, Earl of
Kent.

Alice Fitz-
alan, wife of
John, Lord
Strange.

Mary Fitzalan,
wife of John,
Lord Beaumont.

John, Lord
Beaumont.

Edmund Mor-
timer, Earl of
March.

Philippa Plan-
tagenet, Coun-
tess of Ulster.

Isabel Mow-
bray, married
James, Lord
Berkeley.

Anne Wells,
married James
Butler, Earl of
Ormond.

John de Beau-
fort, Marquis of
Dorset.

Margaret
Holland.

Henry, Lord
Beaumont.

Henry Percy, mar.
Elizabeth Mortimer.

Maurice, Lord
Berkeley.

Richard But-
ler.

JAMES I., King of
Scotland.

Joan de Beau-
fort.

Anakaret
Strange, mar.
Richard,
Lord Talbot.

John, Viscount
Beaumont.

John, Lord
Clifford.

Elizabeth Percy.

Edmond But-
ler.

James Doug-
las, Earl of
Morton.

Joan Stuart,
Princess of
Scotland.

JAMES II., King of
Scotland.

Alice Tal-
bot, wife
of Thomas
Barre.

Joan Beau-
mont, mar.
John, Lord
Lovell.

Philip Went-
worth.

Mary Clif-
ford.

Thomas, Lord
Berkeley.

James Butler.

Janet Douglas,
mar. Patrick
Hepburn, Earl
of Bothwell.

John Doug-
las, Earl of
Morton.

Mary Stuart,
Princess of
Scotland,
mar. James,
Lord Hamil-
ton.

Joan Barre,
mar. Willi-
am Catesby.

Henry Wentworth.

Pierce Butler,
Earl of Or-
mond.

Janet Hepburn,
mar. George,
Lord Seton.

James Doug-
las, Earl of
Morton.

James Hamil-
ton, Earl of
Arran.

Fridiswide
Lovell, mar.
Edward
Norreys.

John Sey-
mour.

Margaret
Wentworth.

Jane Berkeley,
married Nicho-
las Poyntz.

James But-
ler, Earl of Or-
mond.

George, Lord
Seton.

Margaret
Douglas.

James Hamil-
ton, Earl of
Arran, Duke
of Chatelhe-
rault.

John Cates-
by.

Henry Nor-
reys.

Edward Sey-
mour, Duke
of Somerset.

Nicholas Poyntz.

John Butler.

George, Lord
Seton.

James Hamil-
ton.

Thomas Cates-
by.

Mary Norreys,
married Arthur
Champer-
nowne.

Edward Sey-
mour.

John Poyntz.

Walter Butler,
Earl of Or-
mond.

Margaret Se-
ton.

Claud Hamilton,
Lord Paisley.

Robert Catesby.

Elizabeth Cham-
pernowne.

Sir Edward Sey-
mour.

Elizabeth Poyntz.

Thomas Butler,
Viscount Thur-
les.

James Hamilton,
Earl of Abercorn.

Hugh Catesby.

Sir Edward Sey-
mour.

Maria But-
ler.

George Hamilton.

Anice Catesby, mar.
William Hastings.

Sir Thomas
Hall.

Catherine
Seymour.

James Hamilton.

William Hastings.

William Coward.

Bridget Hall.

James Hamilton, Earl of Abercorn.

Mary Hastings.

William Coward.

George Hamilton.

Bridget Coward.

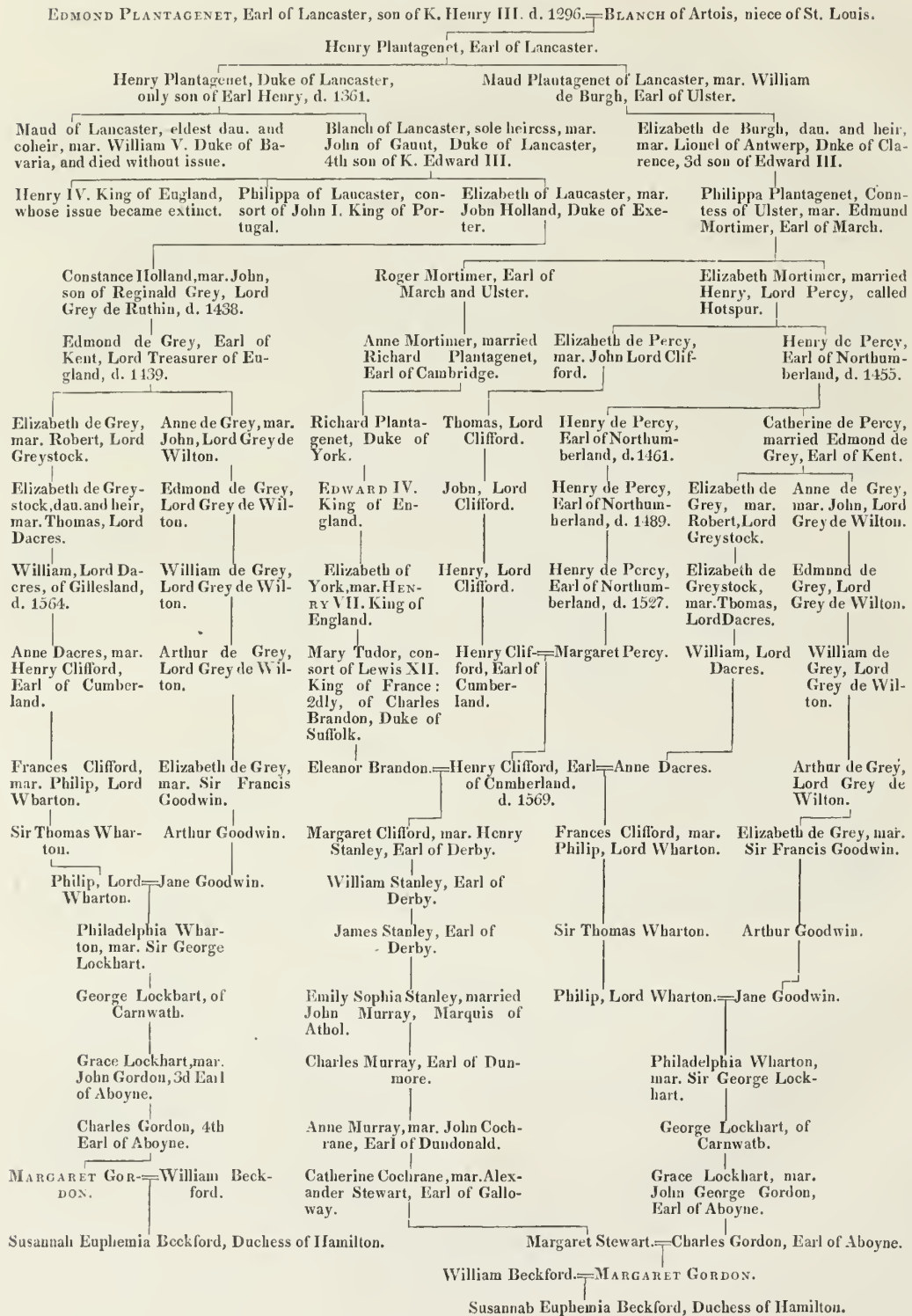
William Beckford.

Maria Hamilton.

WILLIAM BECKFORD.

TABLE V.

SHewing SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL DESCENTS OF LADY MARGARET BECKFORD, FROM THE HOUSE OF LANCASTER.



From the state bed-room a narrow gallery, with four recessed windows on the western side, and china closets opposite, communicates to a small room called the *Tribune*, which is filled with pictures, cabinets, &c. and opens by a very picturesquely enriched balcony into the great octagon.

At the bottom of the square stairs, e. is a low and somewhat gloomy apartment, c, surrounded with oak shelves, and filled with an immense and valuable collection of porcelain, chiefly oriental. A small doorway communicates to a long narrow passage, o. on the north side of the new building. On the left is a room n. with a large bay window; and to the right is an opening to the *dining-room*, h.; which, with the rooms i. and k., are lighted by the lower parts of three very large and lofty windows. Though the rooms h. and i. are furnished and fitted up *pro tempore*, they are in an unfinished state; as, indeed, is the whole of this wing. The chief part of the basement floor is occupied by a truly monastic looking kitchen; and its numerous appendages are such as would have suited a lordly abbot in the most hospitable days of our antient ecclesiastical establishments. Over the middle or principal floor of this wing is another floor, which was to have been finished and fitted up as a grand *baronial hall*, commemorative of the obtention and confirmation of *Magna Charta*. The armorial achievements of all the barons who responded to the observance of that Charter, by the reluctant monarch, were intended to adorn this most noble apartment: for it is a remarkable fact, that Mr. Beckford or his lady have deduced their direct descent from *all* the barons of whom any issue are remaining, and who are named by Matthew Paris, as assembled on that memorable occasion. The history of the *Magna Charta* transaction has never been fully developed; but it is hoped that the united researches of historians, antiquaries, and heralds will afford ample and authentic materials for such a work⁵.

⁵ This portion of the Abbey is well calculated to shew what the splendid proprietor intended; or, at least, it manifests his ideas of magnitude and grandeur. In general we find the architect restrained by his employer; who is either limited in means or in ideas. The architect of Font-hill was entirely released from both these restraints; for I am persuaded that he had free and full scope for the exercise of *all* his professional talents: and had these been as considerable as

South of the octagon is a long apartment called *St. Michael's Gallery*, because the proprietor intended to have its windows painted with the arms

frequently ascribed to him, and had he been impelled by laudable ambition—had he bestowed but common industry on the subject—had he felt that enthusiasm which the occasion demanded, and acted with that inflexible perseverance which his munificent employer had a right to expect, we should then indeed have seen an edifice of surpassing magnitude, beauty, and grandeur; one calculated to prove the fallacy and folly of the common notion, that all excellence and merit in the ecclesiastical species of architecture was extinguished with the dissolution of monasteries. That we have seen many failures and puerilities, is true; but the first obstacle to the accomplishment of any thing great and excellent is expense; and the second arises from the difficulty of finding an architect and patron equally well informed, equally zealous, and cordially unanimous. Every incentive and every opportunity appear to have been afforded to the surveyor of Fonthill Abbey; but he was either insensible to their call, or incapable of employing them to great and eminent results. All admirers of this interesting class of architecture must look with sorrow and pain on every defect in a building where there were such inducements, and which presented such favourable opportunities. The present hall has been rebuilt, of nearly double its first dimensions: and the central tower is the third that has been raised! Such things ought not to have occurred: for the man of science and genius, if provided with means, can as easily throw a granite or iron arch across a broad river, as a carpenter can put together a series of posts and planks: he can also raise a tall and permanent spire, like that of Salisbury, or a noble cupola, like that of St. Paul's, as readily as a bricklayer can put up a stack of chimneys, or build a common wall. Had a Shakspeare or a Milton studied architecture, and been favoured with such opportunities as were presented at Fonthill, we should have seen what genius could effect in this useful and powerful art.

“ These are impérial works, and worthy kings.”

Had not Pericles met with a Phidias, he would neither have deserved nor attained the fame that now embalms his memory; nor would the name of Greece have sounded so harmoniously to the classic ear; but the fortunate and cordial cooperation of wealth and talent can almost

“ Raise a mortal to the skies,
Or call an angel down.”

It is on all occasions an ungracious as it is a painful task, to criticise the works of the dead; but the dead cannot feel or suffer from censure, and the living must be benefited by liberal and discriminating inquiry. I cannot help thinking it false delicacy and bad policy to pass over the errors and defects of artists, because they have terminated their earthly career, and can “sin no more.” Authors are not thus privileged and protected; for their productions are subject to endless animadversion. A Parthenon, a St. Peter's, and a St. Paul's are likewise public

of the knights of that Order, from whom he traces descent. At the entrance to this room, from the octagon, is a pair of folding doors, of oak, glazed with plate glass, and ornamented with mullions and tracery. Near these doors, on the west side, is a circular staircase, which communicates to a suite of apartments over the gallery, and which Mr. Beckford occupied as a private sitting-room, library, bed-room, and dressing room. The St. Michael gallery has five pointed arched windows on the west side, three oriels on the east, two of which are over fire-places, and one of larger dimensions at the south end. Its roof is vaulted, and adorned with fan-shaped tracery, which spring from angel-brackets. Each of the angels holds an emblazoned escoccheon, whilst a series of several others are painted, by Sarney, on the frieze. These are charged with the arms of Mervyn, Hamilton, Seymour, Zouche, Rohan, Hall, Coward, Latimer, &c. The windows of this apartment are richly decorated with painted glass, by Eginton, of arms and historical figures, the latter of which are copied from pictures by Hamilton. The very beautiful window nearest the south end of this gallery is filled with painted

property, and therefore appropriate subjects for public criticism. These, like the writings of Homer, Milton, and Shakspeare, increase in estimation and value in proportion to the intensity of investigation employed on them. Modern architecture also, if excellent, must be better known and appreciated by animadversion. If, as in the instance before us, an artist has acquired untenable fame, it cannot last. In consequence of some designs he made for Downing College, Cambridge, in the year 1804, Mr. Hope, who proves his ample qualifications for criticising such works, wrote and published the following remarks: "Neither elevations nor sections display a single instance of fancy, a single spark of genius, to make up for their many faults. Every thing alike in them is trite, common-place, nay, often vulgar. The pile has so little a character of its own, that the style of the gateway soars not above that of a common park entrance, and the rest of the building might, but for the niches within the portico and the heavy tower over it, be mistaken for a gentleman's country residence. The decorations are such as we see every day, but behold every time not with a renewed pleasure, but with a growing satiety and disgust. The portico is that, not of the Roman Pantheon, but of the Pantheon in Oxford Street; and however much credit I am willing to give the architect of that temple of pleasure for the inside thereof, though borrowed from the very different kind of temple consecrated by the Emperor Justinian to Divine Wisdom, yet I much doubt that a man of taste would ever quote its outside portico among the fine architectural productions of our time: why then should the same architect, so many years after, not satisfied with repeating its obsolete form in a chapel on the road to Highgate, again replicate the same in a most important addition to one of the first Universities in Great Britain?"

glass, in five compartments, representing figures of Venerable Bede and Roger Bacon; also three escocheons of arms richly emblazoned: that at the top contains the arms of Mr. Beckford quartering Hamilton and Arran, and impaling six quarterings, viz. 1. Gordon-Aboyne: 2. Gordon: 3. Badenoch: 4. Seton: 5. Fraser: 6. as 1st. The two shields of arms below the figures are charged with the Catesby quarterings⁶, viz. on the dexter side are the arms of Sir William Catesby, quartering, 1. Catesby: 2. Cranford: 3. Mountford: 4. Braundeston, and with an escocheon of pretence. Surmounting the shield is the Catesby crest. The coat of arms on the sinister side is that of John Catesby, of Althorpe and Hinton, Esq. with six quarterings, and surmounted by a crest as above. (See Plate IX.)

A corresponding east window is also adorned with painted glass, by Eginton, in which are figures of St. Etheldreda and St. Columba, also three emblazoned escocheons: viz. 1st. with six quarterings of Mr. Beckford, i. e. 1. Beckford: 2. Hamilton quartering Arran: 3. Coward: 4. Hall: 5. Rogers, and 6. Besill: 2d and 3d Catesby.

The *south oriel*, at the extremity of the gallery, is adorned in some of the upper compartments with four figures, from paintings by Hamilton, of so many fathers of the church, viz. St. Jerome, St. Athanasius, St. Ambrose, and St. Augustine. Four other panes are enriched with emblazoned shields, of the four paternal connections of Mr. Beckford: 1. the achievement of Mr. Beckford's late uncle, Francis Beckford, of Basing, county of Hants, Esq. 2. Francis Love Beckford, son and heir of the above: 3. Mr. Beckford's aunt, Elizabeth, Countess of Effingham: and 4. Peter Beckford, of Stapleton, county of Dorset, Esq. cousin german to Mr. Beckford.

The annexed view, Pl. X. represents the southern oriel, with its painted glass at top, large panes of plate glass below, through which is seen a pleas-

⁶ "The family of Catesby is of high antiquity, in Northamptonshire; and from which Mr. Beckford is lineally descended; his great great grandfather, William Hastings, of Hinton, Esq. having been the son of William Hastings, by Amy, daughter of Hugh Catesby, of Hinton, Esq." *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1622, p. 203. See an interesting Pedigree, with Biographical Memoirs of the Catesbys, in Baker's very valuable and authentic "*History of Northamptonshire*," vol. i. p. 243, &c.

ing prospect of the distant country, one of the small or east windows, with a fire place beneath, and part of the groining : also chairs, stools, table, candelabras, draperies, amber cabinet, and an antient *Reliquary* in the window. The latter is an article of too much curiosity, antiquity, and rarity to be passed with a slight notice only. In Mr. Christie's Catalogue it is described as a "Greek shrine of metal, for containing relics, brought by St. Louis from Palestine, and had been deposited at St. Denys, whence it was taken during the French Revolution." Such is part of the history of this rare work of antique art, which so nearly corresponds with a reliquary engraved for and described in the second volume of "*Vetusta Monumenta*" of the Society of Antiquaries, that many persons might regard it as the same article. That was in the possession of Mr. Astle, in 1789, and is said to have belonged to Mahmsbury Abbey. The design, workmanship, and embellishments on the surface of the Fonthill relic are curious and interesting, as illustrative of the history of the arts. Figures representing the Deity, the crucified Saviour, Apostles, with emblems of the Evangelists, and other ornaments, also columns, arches, &c. are engraved in and relieved on the surface. The heads, in metal, are in bold relief, whilst the draperies are enamelled with blue and green colours.

In the large central oriel on the east side of the gallery are the armorial bearings of *James II.* King of Scotland, and of his consort Queen Mary of Gueldres. "The lustre of the descent of this queen can scarcely be credited but by the patient genealogist, who has investigated the lines of her ancestry. Daughter of Arnolph II. Duke of Gueldres and Juliers, by Catharine of Cleves, the daughter of Mary of Burgundy, she reckoned amongst her lineal progenitors the Emperors of the East, the Czars of Muscovy, and the sovereigns of almost every imperial and royal house in Europe⁷."

The following table alludes to and explains the direct paternal and maternal descent of Mr. Beckford's daughter, the Duchess of Hamilton, from the royal house of Scotland.

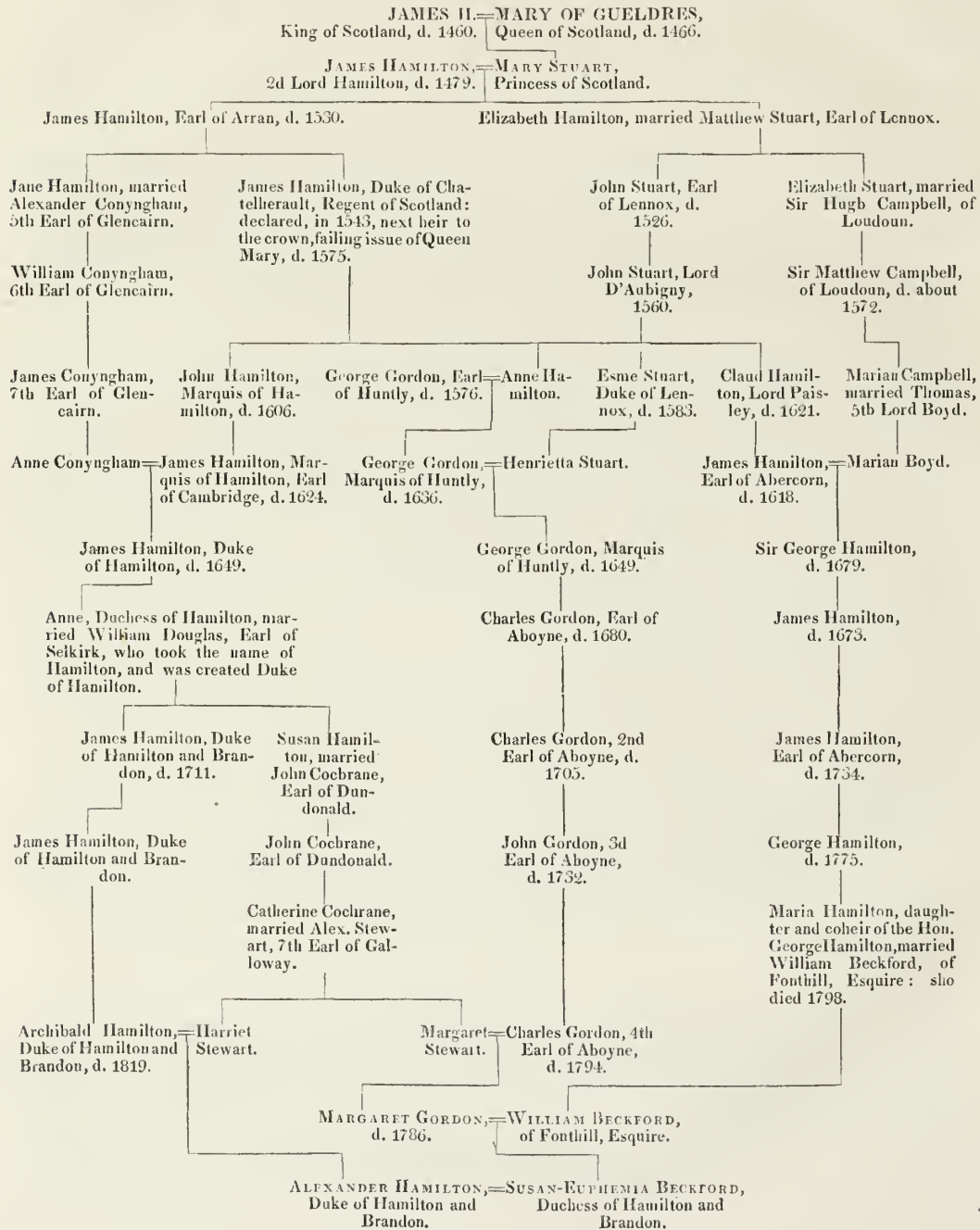
⁷ Gentleman's Magazine, 1822, vol. i. p. 204.

TABLE VI.

DESCENT OF HER GRACE

SUSAN-EUPHEMIA, DUCHESS OF HAMILTON AND BRANDON,

ONLY SURVIVING DAUGHTER OF WILLIAM BECKFORD, ESQ. THROUGH VARIOUS LINES, BOTH PATERNALLY AND MATERNALLY, FROM JAMES LORD HAMILTON AND THE PRINCESS MARY STUART.



In the St. Michael Gallery are six curious and interesting *ebony chairs*, which formerly belonged to the magnificent and haughty Wolsey, and were part of the splendid furniture of Esher Palace. They are shewn in Pl. X.

A *bottle*, or *coffee-pot*, of pale sea green *oriental china*, shewn in the title page, PLATE XI. is placed in this room. It may be regarded as a valuable curiosity, from being “the earliest known specimen of porcelain introduced from China into Europe, as it refers to a period earlier than the circumnavigation of the Cape of Good Hope by the Portuguese.” The cup is ornamented with sunk quatrefoil compartments, having flowers in relief; whilst its base, rim, spout, and handle are formed of enchased silver, with enamelled ornaments and shields, and charged with inscriptions in old French and in antique characters. These shields and inscriptions allude to the house of Anjou and Joan of Arragon, Queen of Naples, to whom this curious work evidently appears to have belonged.

In another niche in the title page, is the representation of a vessel or cup, “formed of a *large block* of *Sardonyx*, hollowed out, and the surface incrustured with vine leaves of good design and sharp execution. A pair of satyrs’ heads are sculptured as handles to the vase; the bottom is externally carved with foliage, and affords reason for believing that this rare and very curious article must have been executed by a Greek artist of Asia Minor.” (Christie’s Catalogue, p. 41.)

Branching from the west side of the St. Michael Gallery is a suite of apartments called the *yellow drawing-rooms*, marked Q. and R. in the plan: and a cabinet-room, or boudoir, S. with a small vestibule. The drawing-rooms receive their appellation from being hung with yellow silk damask. On the west side are three windows in three sides of an octagon; whilst the south side is lighted by three windows in the eastern, and two in the western room. The other sides are fitted up with oak bookcases, and the ceiling is ornamented with a profusion of tracery. (See Plan, fig. 4.)

The *cabinet-room*, marked S., is a beautiful little apartment, hung with green silk, and having a ceiling covered with elaborate fan-shaped tracery. (See fig. 1. in the Plan.) An octangular staircase at the south-west angle (at X.) communicates to apartments both above and below the drawing-rooms.

On the ground-floor is the *old dining-room*, or the brown parlour, thus termed from the colour of its oak wainscoting. This spacious apartment is lighted by eight pointed windows. Five of these range within the southern cloister; and the other three form the lower story of the western oriel. The tops of these windows are filled with stained glass, exhibiting portraits of twelve English monarchs from William the Conqueror to Richard the Second; and of the following distinguished personages: Robert Earl of Gloucester, natural son of Henry the First; Sir Hugh Bardolph; John Lord Montacute; Sir Hugh Hastings; Robert Fitz Hamon; Laurence Hastings, Earl of Pembroke; Sir Reginald Bray; Arthur Prince of Wales, son of Henry the Seventh; Sir Hugh Marville; Sir William Tracy; Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, Clare and Hartford; Thomas le Despencer, Earl of Gloucester; Sir Brian Stapleton; Sir John Harsick; Aubrey de Vere, second Earl of Oxford, &c. These figures were executed by the late Mr. Eginton, after drawings by W. Hamilton, Esq. R. A. Several of the windows in the Abbey were executed under the direction of Mr. Wm. Raphael Eginton, of Birmingham.

Such are the *principal* rooms, features, grounds, &c. of Fonthill Abbey; and these I have endeavoured to characterize in forcible, but at the same time, I hope, appropriate language^s.

The descriptions might have been extended several pages further, but I forbear to enter into more minute detail, fearful of making the narrative prolix and tedious. It would otherwise be easy to render the history and descent of the demesne much more correct than hitherto published; furnish digressive anecdotes of some of its lords; an original memoir of the intrepid

^s Though the whole volume has been long in progress, the literary part of it has been hastily, spontaneously, and feelingly written. The greater part of it indeed has been penned after nine o'clock at night, and after days of varied, active, and distracting occupation. I mention this in the hopes of obtaining some indulgence for any errors or omissions which the fastidious reader may discover.

and patriotic lord mayor; descant on the numerous works of art and vertu with which the Abbey is enriched and adorned; and intersperse the narrative with marvellous stories respecting the building, its enlightened founder, and its once so highly favoured architect. On all these subjects I have, of course, heard much, and have noted down many memorandums respecting them; but am inclined to think that however favourably such details might be received by the candid part of the public, they would not be equally appreciated by those who are too apt to regard such matters with a jaundiced and envious eye.

The splendid LIBRARY of Fonthill Abbey is of too much importance in the history of the mansion to be passed without some comment: although it will be impossible to do justice to its peculiar character in the present volume. In Clarke's "Repertorium Bibliographicum," 8vo. 1819, some of its choicest rarities are specified. Among these are the following, "An extensive Series of Spanish and Portuguese Chronicles," "Some of the rarest *Facetiæ*, History, Poetry, &c. in all languages, and in the most beautiful condition." Among the MSS. are many inestimable volumes "formerly in the possession of Shah-Aulum; they exhibit an undoubted assemblage of portraits of illustrious persons, representations of ceremonies, and perspective views." In works of travels this collection may be said to stand almost unrivalled: but however curious and valuable in this or other branches of literature, the most interesting part of its contents are the manuscript annotations with which almost every volume is enriched. The collector of the Fonthill library is not only an incessant reader, but a thinker and a writer. The few publications he has hitherto given to the world evince no common portion of literary talent; nor will the two following short poems, from his pen, be read with indifference by those who have hearts to appreciate their power and pathos.

A PRAYER.

LIKE the low murmur of the seeret stream
 Which through dark alders winds its shaded way,
 My suppliant voicee is heard:—Ah! do not deem
 That on vain toys I throw my hours away.

In the reecesses of the forest vale,
 On the wild mountain,—on the verdant sod,
 Where the fresh breezes of the morn prevail,
 I wander lonely, communing with God.

When the faint siekness of a wounded heart
 Creeps in eold shudderings through my sinking frame,
 I turn to thee,—that holy peace impart
 Which soothes the invokers of thy awful name.

O all-pervading Spirit!—saered beam!
 Parent of life and light!—Eternal Power!
 Grant me through obvious clouds one transient gleam
 Of thy bright essence in my dying hour!

 THE LAST DAY.

“Dies iræ, Dies illa!”

Hark! heard ye not that deep, appalling sound?
 Tremble!—for lo the vex'd, the affrighted ground
 Heaves strong in dread convulsion—streams of fire
 Burst from the vengeful sky—a voice of ire
 Proclaims, ‘Ye guilty, wait your final doom:
 No more the silent refuge of the tomb
 Shall screen your crimes, your frailties. Conscience reigns,—
 Earth needs no other septré;—what remains
 Beyond her fated limits, dare not tell;—
 Eternal Justice!—Judgment!—Heaven!—Hell!’

Chap. III.

SUCCINCT MEMOIR OF THE FAMILIES OF BECKFORD AND HERING: WITH GENEALOGICAL TABLES ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE SAME.

THE FAMILY OF BECKFORD appears to have been established in Gloucestershire at an early period of our history. Whether it derived its patronymic from, or gave name to, the parish of Beckford, or Beceford, in that county, where the manor had been, according to Domesday book, *terra Regis* in the time of the Confessor¹; or whether it was of Norman origin, and therefore of more recent introduction, has not been clearly ascertained. The latter conjecture might find support in the supposed allusion to the name in the *family crest*, “a heron’s head, holding a fish in the beak”—*quasi* BEC FORT: whilst the former would suggest a meaning entirely different; the word *Bece*, pronounced *Beke*, signifying, in the Danish and other northern dialects, a *brook* or *stream*.

As to the manor of Beckford, it appears to have been, in the reign of Henry I. part of the possessions of Ravelle, chamberlain of Normandy, and to have been granted by him to the Abbey of St. Martin and St. Barbara (St. Barbe en Auge) in that province. Being amongst the alien priories, Beckford was, on their suppression by Henry VI. bestowed on Eton College, and, subsequently, by Edward IV. on Fotheringhay².

¹ See Rudders’s and Atkins’s Histories of Gloucestershire, in loco.

² Tanner’s Notitiæ.

With respect to the family, we find Robert de Beckesford granting to the Abbey of Gloucester, between 1102 and 1134, certain tithes at Heycote³; and Reginald de Bekeford soon afterwards endowing the Hospitallers of St. John with lands at Butiatune⁴.

The next mention of the name is anno 14 Rich. II.; when Thomas, the son of Alexander de Beckford, occurs in the entail of considerable lands in Batsford, then called Beceshore, the parish adjoining to Beckford⁵.

Sir William Beckford appears amongst the principal adherents of Richard III. who attended him to Bosworth Field⁶, and probably shared there the fate of his sovereign; as the public records of the succeeding dynasty are silent upon the subject of his attainder.

The consequence of the family, thus eclipsed by the fortunes of war, was destined to be revived under the same powerful agency. The conquest of Jamaica, in 1656, afforded a brilliant opening to enterprise and talent: and, among the many gallant persons who availed themselves of it, was Colonel PETER BECKFORD, who, by singular address and ability in the conduct of military and civil affairs, soon became the most distinguished of the new colonists. He raised himself, during the reign of the restored monarch Charles II., to the high station of President of the Council; obtained several important grants; and was, at length, by William III. appointed Lieutenant Governor and Commander in Chief of the Island. He died in 1710, possessed of an immense extent of property.

PETER BECKFORD, Esq. his eldest son and heir, filled the office of Speaker of the Assembly; and died, in 1735, leaving by Bathshua his wife, daughter and coheir of Julines Hering, Esq. a Colonel in the Army, a numerous progeny. Peter Beckford, Esq. his eldest son and heir, dying in 1737 unmarried, the inheritance devolved upon his next brother

WILLIAM BECKFORD, Esq. This distinguished person, who acquired the estate of Fonthill, was twice Lord Mayor and one of the representatives in Parliament for the city of London. He married Maria, daughter and at

³ Monast. Angl. 1 edit. vol. i. 116.

⁴ Mon. Angl. vol. ii. 529.

⁵ Atkyns in loco.

⁶ Harl. MSS. No. 542, 34.

length coheir of the Hon. George Hamilton, M. P. for Wells, second surviving son of James the sixth Earl of Abercorn; and died in 1770, leaving his only son and heir, the present

WILLIAM BECKFORD, Esq. who, by the Lady Margaret Gordon, his wife, only daughter of Charles the fourth Earl of Aboyne, has had issue two daughters:—1. Margaret-Maria-Elizabeth, who married Major-General James Orde, and died in 1818, leaving two daughters:—2. Susannah-Euphemia, who married her cousin, Alexander, Duke of Hamilton and Brandon, and has a son, William-Alexander-Anthony-Archibald, Marquis of Douglas and Clydesdale, and a daughter, Lady Susan Hamilton.

The *Arms* of HERING appearing in different parts of the edifice, it may be interesting to offer some brief genealogical notices of this family, the representation of which is divided between the present Baroness Holland (as great-grand-daughter and heir-general of Florentius Vassal, Esquire, by Anne-Maria Hering, his wife, the daughter and at length coheir of Julines Hering, Esquire) and Mr. Beckford, in right of his grandmother on the paternal side, Bathshua Hering, the other coheir, who was the wife of Peter Beckford, Esquire.

The antient and knightly family of HERING, or HARANG, was of considerable note, and enjoyed large possessions in Dorsetshire; giving its name, as an adjunct, to several extensive manors in that county, which, so early as the reign of Henry VI., devolved to female coheirs, who intermarried with the families of De la Lynde, Russell, and Williams.

About the period of the extinction of the surname in Dorsetshire, the public records contain memorials of several generations of the family now under consideration, established at Owsley Minor, in the county of Warwick, and afterwards at Coventry, where the chief municipal offices were held by individuals of the name during two centuries. Julines Hering, the son of Richard Hering, by Margaret Carrington (the said Richard having been the son of William Hering, by Alice Pickering), intermarried with Agnes, the daughter and coheir of John Tallante, who held lands of the crown in capite which, upon his death in the IVth of Elizabeth, descended to his

grandsons and coheirs, John Hering, son of his daughter Agnes, and Michael Sandbrooke, son of Sanchia his other daughter. Julines Hering, son of the said John Hering, intermarried with Christian, the daughter and coheir of John Gellibrand (of a very antient family in Lancashire) by Elizabeth Oxenbridge, descended from that distinguished house, whose chiefs were lords of Hurstborne Priors, in Hants, and filled offices of great trust under several reigns. Nathaniel Hering, the issue of that marriage, took to his first wife Elizabeth, the only daughter of Caleb Cockcroft, of London, Esquire, by Elizabeth, his wife, the daughter of Daniel Oxenbridge, of Daventry, in Northamptonshire, and also of London, Esquire. This Elizabeth Oxenbridge was, secondly, the wife of Oliver St. John, Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas under Cromwell; and, thirdly, of Sir Humphry Sydenham, of Combe St. Nicholas, in Somersetshire.

The subjoined Table (VII.) will illustrate the family of HERING subsequently to this period: but we cannot, after a cursory review of the ancestry of Elizabeth Oxenbridge, refrain from adverting to the rare combination, which the several ascending lines present, of some of the most illustrious descents in the kingdom. She was the grand-daughter, on the maternal side, of Thomas Harby, of Adston, in Northamptonshire, Esquire, by Catherine, his wife, the daughter of Clement Throckmorton, of Haseley, com. Warwick, Esquire, by Katherine Nevil, daughter of Sir Edward Nevil, and grand-daughter of George Lord Abergavenny, the grandson of Ralph Nevil, Earl of Westmorland, by Joan de Beaufort, daughter of John of Gaunt. Clement Throckmorton reckoned amongst his ancestors the Lords Vaux of Harroden, Fitzhugh, Willoughby d'Eresby, Grey of Rotherfield, Marmyon, Montacute, &c.: and Katherine Nevil, being lineally descended from Constance Plantagenet, daughter of Edmond of Langley, Duke of York, by Isabel of Castile, was directly allied to the blood royal, and to the most distinguished of our antient nobility.

The following Tables will serve to exemplify the preceding memoirs, and also point out some further descents and connexions of Mr. Beckford.

TABLE VII.

SHEWING THE MATERNAL CONNEXIONS OF THE LATE WILLIAM BECKFORD, ESQ.

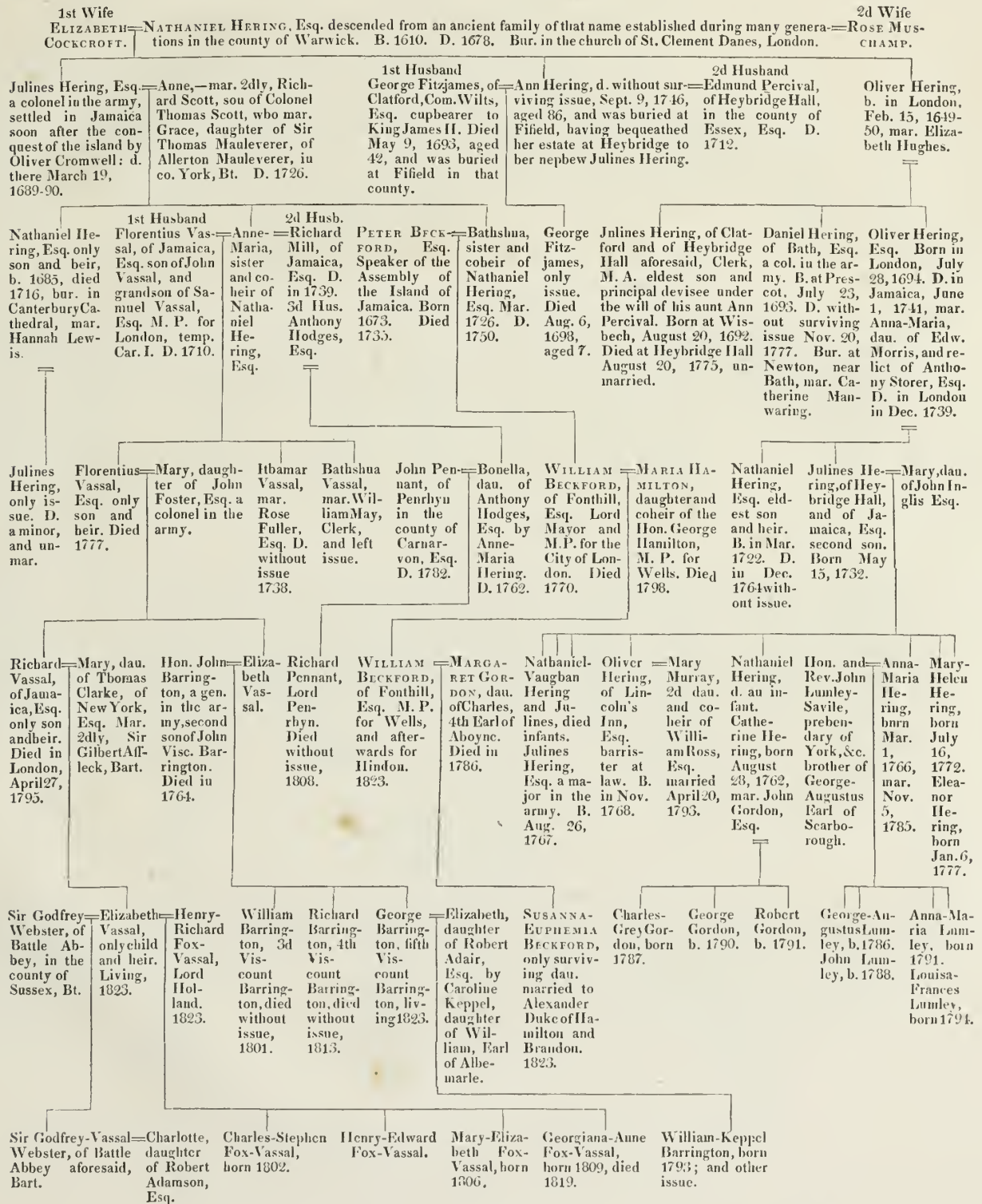
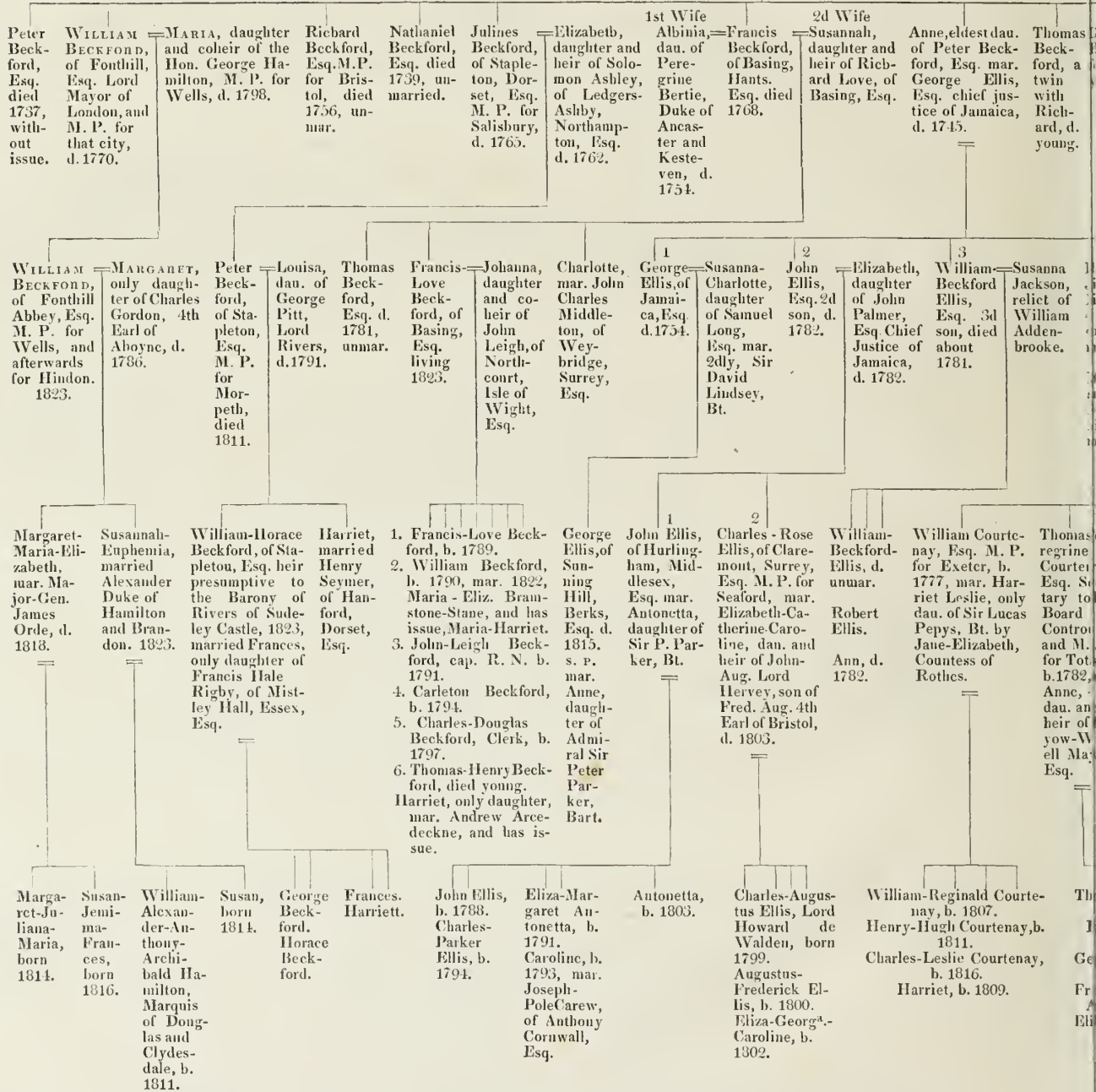


TABLE VIII.—SHEWING THE IMMEDIATE AND CO

Bridget, first wife of Peter Beckford, Esq. d. 1691—PETER BECKFORD, Esq. a colonel in the army, president of the cot

PETER BECKFORD, Esq. Speaker of the House—BATHSHUA, daughter and coheir of Julines
of Assembly of the island of Jamaica, d. 1735. Hering, Esq. a colonel in the army, d. 1750.



COLLATERAL PATERNAL CONNEXIONS OF WILLIAM BECKFORD, ESQ.

1, lieutenant governor and commander in chief of the island of Jamaica, d. 1710.—Anne Ballard, second wife of Peter Beckford, Esq. mar. 1692, d. 1696.

Charles Beckford, an infant, 1677. Priscilla, b. 1675. Elizabeth, b. 1678. Mary Tolderby, (1st Wife). Thomas Beckford, of the island of Jamaica, Esq. d. 1731. Mary, daughter and sole heir of Thomas Ballard, Esq. (2d Wife).

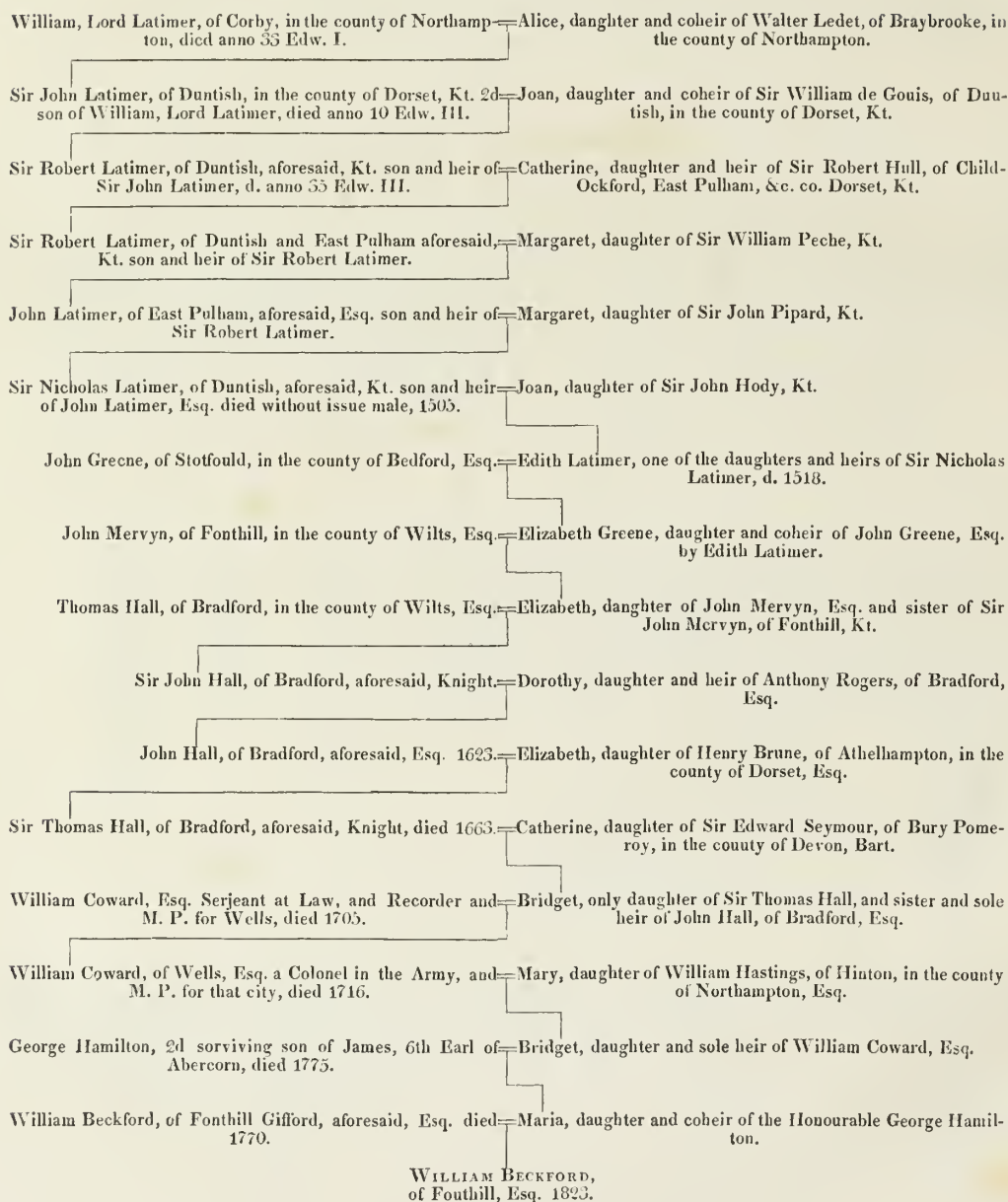
George Beckford, d. young. Phillis and Batshua Beckford, d. unmar. Thomas Howard, 2d Earl of Effingham, Dep. Earl Marshal of England, d. 1763. Elizabeth, 2d surviving dau. of Peter Beckford, Esq. d. 1791. Sir George Howard, K. B. Field Marshal, &c. d. 1796. Ballard Beckford, of Jamaica, Esq. died there, 1760. Anne, daughter of John Clark, Esq. Gov. of New York. Thomas Beckford, of Jamaica, Esq. 2d son, d. 1746. Mary-Elizabeth, daughter of Robert Polloitz Byndlosse, of Jamaica, Esq. Charles Beckford, b. 1712.

Bert-Thomas Howard, 3d Earl of Effingham, Deputy Earl Marshal, &c. Gov. of Jamaica, d. there, 1791. s. p. Richard Howard, 4th and last Earl of Effingham, d. 1816. s. p. Elizabeth, eldest dau. mar. Henry Reginald Courtenay, Lord Bishop of Exeter, d. 1815. Anne, 2d dau. mar. Christ. Carleton, Esq. nephew of Guy Lord Dorchester. He died in 1787, s. p. Maria, 3d dau. mar. Guy Carleton, Lord Dorchester, K. B. who died Nov. 10, 1808. Frances-Flerring, b. 1755, died unmarried. Ballard Beckford, of Jamaica, Esq. only son, d. 1764. Mary, sole daughter and heir, mar. James Johnstone, Esq. Frances, dau. of John Buckner, Esq. Thomas Ballard, d. young, 1747. s. p. Philip, died without issue. Matthew, d. without issue. Jane-Mary, eldest daughter, mar. Thomas Hay, Esq. Secretary of the island of Jamaica, d. 1754. s. p. John Palmer, of Jamaica, Esq. d. 1757, s. p. (1st husband). Mary-Ballard, daughter and at length sole heir of Thomas Beckford, Esq. d. 1797. Edward Long, of Aldermaston House, Berks, Esq. Judge of the Vice Admiralty Court of Jamaica. (2d husband).

Elizabeth, one of the Maids of Honour to her Majesty Queen Charlotte, b. 1779. Catherine, mar. Edw. Berens, Clerk, Vicar of Shrivenham, Berks, b. 1781. Anne, b. 1784. Frances-Charlotte, married Edw. Bouverie, Clerk, nephew of Jacob, Earl of Radnor. Guy and Thomas Carleton, d. s. p. Christopher Carleton, Esq. died 1806, mar. Priscilla, dau. of William Bedford, Esq. Maria mar. William-Orde-Powlett, Lord Bolton. George Carleton, a Lieut. Col. slain at Bergen-op-Zoom, 1814. mar. Henrietta, dau. of Edward King, of Ashham Hall, Esq. Frances, married John Orde Clerk, and died in 1812, leaving 6 children. Charles, Dudley, Richard, married Frances-Louisa, daughter and co-heir of Eusebius Horton, of Cattoo, Esq. Edward Beeston Long, Esq. born 1763, mar. Mary, dau. and heir of John Thomlinson, Esq. M. P. for Steyning. Robert Ballard Long, Esq. Lieut. Gen. in the army. 1825. Charles-Beckford Long, of Woolhampton, Berks, Esq. b. 1771, mar. Fanny Mouro, dau. and heir of Lucius Tucker, Esq. Catharine, married Richard Dawkins, Esq. Charlotte, mar. Sir George Pocock, of Hart, Durham, Bart. Elizabeth, mar. Lord Henry-Thomas-Molyneux Howard, Dep. Earl Marshal of England, brother to the Duke of Norfolk. Thomas-Peregrine Courtenay, b. 1810. Rinald Courtenay, b. 1813. Cecile-Henry Courtenay, b. 1814. Frances Courtenay, b. 1816. Ab-Mayow, b. 1807. Elizabeth-Howard, b. 1808. Mary, b. 1811. Arthur-Henry Carleton, Lord Dorchester, b. 1805. Guy Carleton, and other issue. Edward-Noel Long. Henry-Lawes Long. Mary. Charles-Edward Long, b. 1796. Edward-James Dawkins. Juliana-Charlotte. Emily. Caroliue. George-Edward Pocock. Edward-Osborne Pocock. Mary-Anne-Sophia. Charlotte-Catherine-Elizabeth. Augustus. Henry-Long Howard, of Greystock Castle, Cumberland, Esq. only son and heir apparent. Henrietta. Isabella. Charlotte. Juliana.

TABLE IX.

DESCENT OF WILLIAM BECKFORD, ESQ. FROM WILLIAM, LORD LATIMER.



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